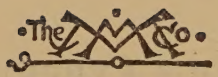
RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES

FOUNDER OF THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

GEORGE WALLINGFORD NOYES

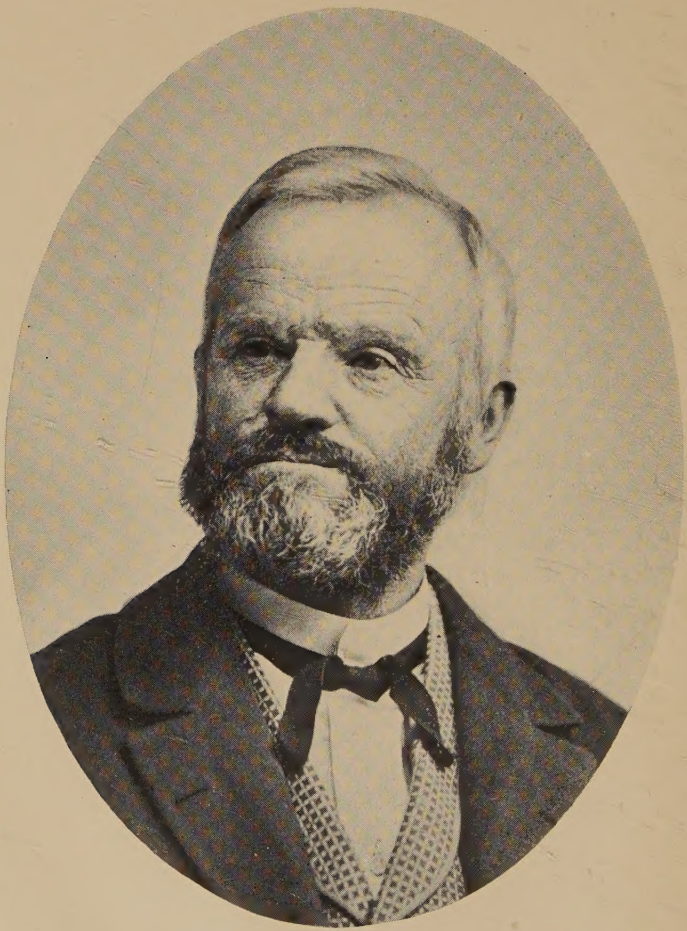
RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES



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TORONTO



JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES, 1867

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE
of
JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES

Founder of the Oneida Community

With Seventeen
Illustrations

Compiled and Edited by
GEORGE WALLINGFORD NOYES

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1923
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Set up and printed. Published April, 1923.

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FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY
NEW YORK

PREFACE

The editor at first designed to make this book strictly a compilation of original documents. But after the work was complete he yielded to the advice of friends as well as the evident logic of the case, and decided to make use of the semi-narrative form of presentation. The chief advantages derived from this form are, that it makes possible a better balancing of the materials in accordance with historical value, and that it provides for the introduction of connecting links which are needed to indicate clearly the sequence of events. In one other respect the execution of the work has deviated from the original plan. The intention had been to present all documents precisely as written. But since many of the documents consisted of imperfect reports of extemporaneous talks, it was soon seen that some condensing and rearranging would be highly desirable. And in fact by his own explicit direction Noyes's writings and talks were constantly during his lifetime undergoing revision at the hands of his literary associates. The editor has, therefore, allowed himself considerable liberty as reviser. He has, of course, scrupulously avoided any alteration of the sense. His aim throughout in both these changes of plan has been to put the reader in possession of the essential thought or fact in the fewest possible words

and with the least possible obscuration from the literary medium.

Ithaca, New York.
April 25, 1922

INTRODUCTION

In the center of New York State lies a region, rich in Indian names and legends, where to the south extends a succession of deep wooded valleys closed in the distance by the foothills of the Allegheny Plateau, and to the north the broad basin of Oneida Lake bordered on its farther side by the blue rim of the Adirondacks. Here in the latter part of the nineteenth century was the scene of a remarkable sociological experiment, the Oneida Community.

The Oneida Community was a product of the great religious revival which swept over America in the years 1830-1834. Its founder, John Humphrey Noyes, and nearly all of his original associates were converts of that revival. After beating against the confines of Calvinistic piety for several years, the religious impulse of these earnest people burst forth at last in an attempt to attain salvation from sin in this world. The experience of the "Perfectionists," as they were called, gradually brought them to the conviction that salvation from sin, though possible under the conditions of ordinary society, must have for its full objective development a reconstructed society. They, therefore, in 1838 formed the nucleus of a Community at Putney, Vermont.

The purpose of this book is to recount the per-

sonal experiences which led to the formation of the Putney Community. A future book, it is hoped, after tracing the history of the Putney Community, will follow Noyes and his fellow-Perfectionists to their final home at Oneida, New York, and tell the story of their unique, daring, dramatic experiment in "Bible Communism."

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RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES

CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY

The Noyes family, if tradition is correct, descends from William Des Noyers, mentioned in "Domesday Book" as one of the barons who accompanied William the Conqueror to England in 1066 A. D.

The first ancestor in modern times of whom we have definite information was William Noyes, who was rector of Choulderton, Wiltshire, England, from 1585 to 1616. The struggle between the Stuarts and the Puritans was then in progress, and William Noyes on account of dissenting religious views was at one time deprived of his lands. In the following generation the struggle became more acute, and his two sons, Nicholas and James, finally decided to emigrate to New England. Taking passage in the *Mary and John,* which sailed from England March 24, 1633, they arrived at the banks of the Mystic River in Massachusetts. They settled first at Medford, and in 1635 moved to Newbury, Massachusetts. From this center their descendants spread over the northern and western parts of the United States and into Canada.

In 1740 Joseph Noyes, grandson of Nicholas and a

shipbuilder by trade, moved to Atkinson, Massachusetts, a small town fifteen miles west of Newbury. Here Joseph and his son Humphrey led the life of plain, hard-working pioneers.

John Noyes, son of Humphrey, and father of the subject of this history, was born at Atkinson in 1764. Making the most of his small opportunities for education, he fitted himself for the teaching profession. The ten years following his seventeenth birthday he spent in teaching village schools, and meanwhile he prepared himself for college. At twenty-seven he entered Dartmouth College, graduating with honor in the class of 1795. After graduation he taught for two years in an academy. Then for two years he was a tutor at Dartmouth, where he numbered among his pupils Daniel Webster.* After a brief trial of the ministry, for which he had prepared himself while tutor, his health failing he decided to go into active business. He therefore engaged as clerk in the store of a Mr. Hale in Brattleboro, Vermont. This was in April 1800, when Mr. Noyes was thirty-six years old.

At this point the thread of his life began to interweave with that of Polly Hayes. She was descended from George Hayes, who came to America from Scotland in 1682, and settled first at Windsor and afterward at Simsbury, Connecticut. Her father, Rutherford Hayes, was born at New Haven, Connecticut, but went to

* J. H. Noyes recalls that, when he was a student at Dartmouth, he was once introduced to Mr. Webster, who had returned to visit the college. As Mr. Webster grasped his hand, he said earnestly: "Young man, I wish I could do as much for you as your father did for me."

Vermont in the early settlement of the State, and established a home at Brattleboro. Polly was the oldest of his eleven children, one of her brothers, Rutherford Hayes 2d, being the father of Rutherford B. Hayes, President of the United States 1877-81.

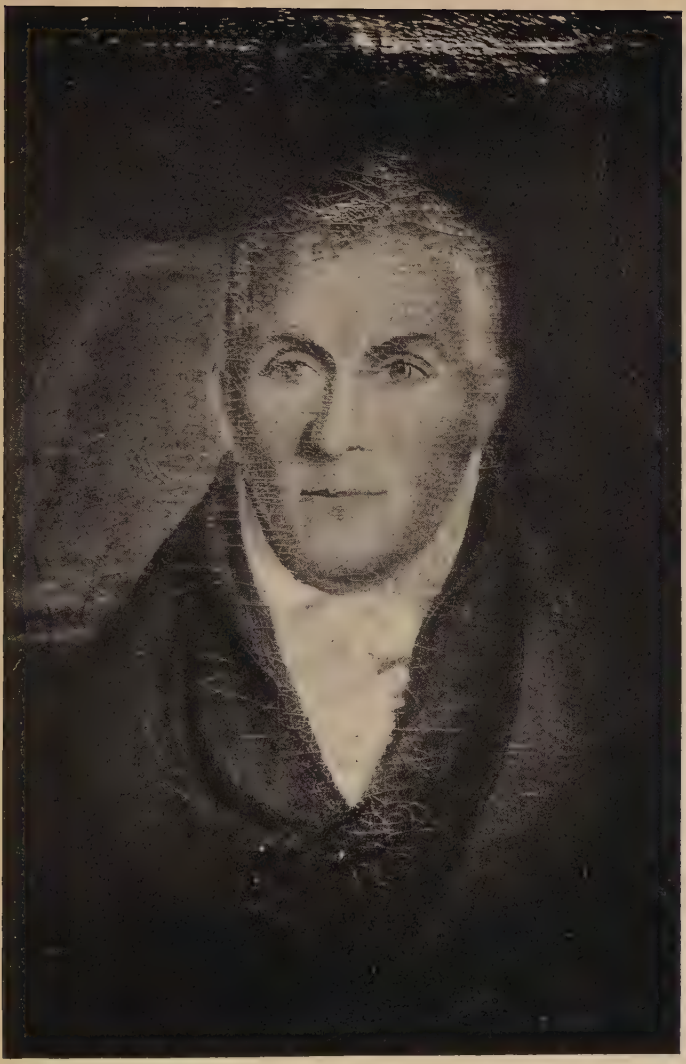
Polly's mother was Chloe Smith, a woman of signal energy and strength of character, of whom William Dean Howells in his *Life of Rutherford B. Hayes* says:

"Above all and first of all she was deeply religious, after the fashion of the days that we now think so grim. With a devotion almost as deep she dedicated her days to incessant work, and her toil often saved the spirit that faltered in its religious gloom. . . . The reminiscence of a granddaughter, at once touching and amusing, gives the color of the Puritanism which steeped in fear and misgiving the indulgence of such love of beauty as she permitted herself. 'I spoke of her passion for worsted work. I have heard her say that Saturday afternoon she put it all into her work-basket, and pushed it under the bed *as far as she could;* then taking out her prosy knitting-work, she tried to get it all out of her mind for Sunday!' Yet she was a true artist in this passion; her devices in worsted were her greatest delight, and she studied them from nature, going into her garden and copying the leaf or flower she meant to embroider. She had an almost equal passion for flowers. . . . In a sketch of family history with which she prefaces her journals, she laments with a simple pathos her possible error in setting work and duty before some other things. 'My husband . . . would sometimes say, The horse is standing in the barn, doing nothing. We will go and

ride. But I would say, I can't leave my work. So he would not go, or go alone. Oh, now I would say to every woman that has a good husband, Enjoy them while they are spared to you, or it will grieve you to the heart when it is too late—when all is over! . . . The faded pages, recording so vividly a type of high character which has passed away with the changing order of things, are of almost unique interest. . . . Work, faith, duty, self-sacrifice, continual self-abasement in the presence of the divine perfection, are the ideal of life which they embody—the old New England ideal. It was a stern and unlovely thing often in its realization; it must have made gloomy weeks and terrible sabbaths; but out of the true stuff it shaped character of unsurpassable uprightness and strength."

Polly, the oldest daughter of Rutherford Hayes and Chloe Smith, a girl of nineteen, after spending the winter with her relatives in New Haven returned in May 1800 to her home in Brattleboro. At this time Mr. Noyes had just gone into business, and Polly found him boarding with her father. Soon an intimacy sprang up between them, which Polly thus describes: "He was nearly twice as old as I. He had always been devoted to study, and had acquired a vast amount of information on almost all subjects—morality, philosophy and science. He was so familiar with these high matters, and so fond of communicating, that I was delighted to hear him talk; and he found in me just that kind of attention that would make us never tired of being together."

"It was in fact," says J. H. Noyes, "the courtship of Othello and Desdemona over again. But the course



JOHN NOYES

of true love, as usual, did not run smooth. Polly was entangled in another engagement, from which her conscience refused to set her free; and Mr. Noyes, though forward in learned discourse, was extremely shy in all matters of the heart. Indeed he was nearly as attentive to Polly's mother, who was only one year older than he, as to Polly herself. So the courtship languished for three years. At last Polly's other suitor adjusted his mind to the change in her feelings, and Mr. Noyes's prudential hesitation was overcome by Polly's youthful buoyancy and irrepressibility. When they were married in 1804 he had reached the ripe age of forty, while she was only twenty-three."

Meanwhile Mr. Noyes's business venture was highly successful. Before the end of the year 1800 he was head of the firm of "Noyes & Mann," which soon had branches in four different towns with Brattleboro as headquarters. The country about Brattleboro was new, and the farmers in clearing their lands made vast quantities of wood ashes. Noyes & Mann gave goods in exchange for ashes, which they made into pot and pearl ashes, and sold at a large profit. Eventually Rutherford Hayes became a partner, and the firm name was changed to "Noyes, Mann & Hayes."

As a result of his business activities Mr. Noyes formed a wide acquaintance in southern Vermont, and his personal qualities brought him popularity. This led him into the field of politics. In 1811 he was elected Representative of Brattleboro in the Vermont Legislature; and in 1815, at the close of the war with England, he was sent to Washington for two years as a member of the House of Representatives.

During a mercantile career of twenty years Mr. Noyes acquired what he considered a competence; and in pursuance of a long-cherished plan he retired from business, and devoted the remainder of his life to the education of his eight children.

In a memoir written in 1877 J. H. Noyes describes his father as primarily a teacher throughout his career. When at the age of thirty-six he went into business, it might be thought that his teaching days were over. "But," says J. H. Noyes, "my opinion is that his teaching days just commenced when he descended from the pulpit and went into social and commercial life, because there he found his natural sphere. He was too bashful for the pulpit, and I cannot think that he was at ease as a teacher in the school, the academy or the college; but in the family circle and in the highways and by-ways of business he was a born Solomon with a modern college education superadded. I have never seen his equal in conversational teaching. He charmed everybody with his practical wisdom and his genial stories. I can truly say that friendly discussions with him did more to make me a thinker than all the discipline of the schools and colleges."

Mr. Noyes, despite his year in the pulpit, was not in later life a professor of religion. He understood Hebrew, felt great respect for the Bible and Christianity, and was a vigorous moralist; but his philosophical cast of mind held him back from committing himself to any particular religious dogma or organization.

Mrs. Noyes, on the other hand, from early childhood manifested a high degree of religious sensibility. She was religiously brought up, and soon after her



POLLY (HAYES) NOYES

marriage joined the Congregational Church. Vital, inquisitive, imaginative, she no sooner saw a principle than she must attempt to realize it in practice. The short-comings revealed by introspection were always a cause of suffering to her, yet religious assurance was a prominent characteristic. Though a member of the church, her intelligence and independence of mind kept her always in advance of strict orthodoxy. She was passionately solicitous about the religious education of her children, and with Mr. Noyes's consent constantly maintained family worship. In the selection of their permanent home, in the choice of schools, and in other important family moves her eye was always on the religious bearing, and her judgment had great weight in deciding the issue.

Into this home, unusually compounded of intellect and heart, nine children were born: Mary, who married Larkin G. Mead, an attorney of Brattleboro, and became the mother of Larkin G. Mead, the sculptor, William R. Mead, member of the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, and Elinor Mead, wife of William Dean Howells; Elizabeth, who married Dr. F. A. Ransom, and settled in Michigan, where she died young; Joanna, who married Samuel Hayes of New Haven, went with him to Trinidad, and died of a tropical fever; John Humphrey, founder of the Oneida Community, and the subject of this biography; Horatio, who became a successful business man and banker; Harriet, Charlotte, and George, all of whom devoted their lives to the Oneida Community; and another George, who died at ten years of age.

CHAPTER II

BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH

John Humphrey Noyes was born at Brattleboro, Vermont, September 3, 1811. The day was "Freeman's Meeting-Day," a holiday, which at that time was annually celebrated in the New England States. It was also the day on which his father was elected Representative of Brattleboro in the Vermont Legislature. His father was called from the election meeting to attend at the birth.

When his mother saw that she had given birth, as she expressed it, to a "proper child," she characteristically devoted him to the Lord, and prayed that he might become a "minister of the everlasting gospel."

When John was three years old, to use his mother's expression, "the devil all but killed him." A servant girl took him for a walk down to his grandmother Hayes's, and John running around fell into a tub of clothes just emptied from the boiler. The burn was deep. The skin came off with his clothes from a place as wide as his mother's hand, and around his body lacking two inches. During the first dressing the child's breath seemed all gone, but while his mother knelt in prayer it came again. It was twelve days before he stood on his feet, and four months before the wound was healed.

He was a little boy when he had the measles. He sat in the house all one day in a dumpy, stupid state until about four o'clock, when all at once he jumped up, and said: "The measles have turned," and went off out-doors. That was the last that was heard of his measles.

He was always fond of thinking. As a little boy he used to say that he would go to bed early, because he wanted to think. He was apt to be passionate and violent when provoked. Even as a boy he was a natural leader. His mother writes: "I can see him now marching off up the hill at the head of a company of his playmates, all armed with mullein-stalks."

In 1817 the family moved to Dummerston, Vermont, a small village near Brattleboro, and here John received his early schooling.

His first serious religious impressions were received when he was only eight years old. He was converted then in a revival at Putney, a neighboring town, and for a time was enthusiastic for serving the Lord and saving his soul; but he was sent away to school at Amherst, Massachusetts, and apparently lost the whole impression.

While attending school at Amherst at the age of nine, he wrote to his mother the following letter, which is the earliest of his writings that has been preserved:

Amherst, May 26, 1821. Saturday, P. M.

Dear Mother:—As school does not keep this afternoon I have begun a letter to you. It is rather too soon, methinks, after our separation. However, as

you told me that I must write long letters to you, and as I am not very quick of intellect, I thought it best to begin soon enough.

I have been pretty contented since you left me, except last evening I was rather inclined to be homesick. I sat in my chamber alone, the wind whistled around the house. I began to think of home, and I became sad. I took my book, and looked over my lesson, then went to the book-store, and got me ink and paper, and begun me a journal, which I intend to write in every day. I like my boarding-place, and have but one or two objections, namely, there is no looking-glass in my room, nor drawers to put my clothes in, which is very unhandy, as every time I go to my trunk I have to haul my things all over; and lastly, my room is in the northwest corner of the house, so that I cannot tell when it is time to get up in the morning.

Sunday evening.—I did not go to meeting this forenoon, because I did not hear the bell till late, and I went down and all were gone to meeting. I went in the afternoon. A Mr. Dickinson preached. A Testament, which was in the list of my books, was forgotten in packing up my things to bring down here. I missed it very much today. Mamma, I must say that when I am not reading, or writing, or studying, I am homesick. Yes, I am homesick. I can't imagine why Kidder does not come. I believe I should feel better, if there were somebody here whom I know, and by whom I am known. How heavily the hours pass! What leisure moments I have I am obliged to spend in solitude. No companion, no bed-fellow, nothing new.

This ain't happiness. But away with all this! I fear I have distressed you already.

Monday night.—Again alone and disconsolate, I take my pen to write a few words to you. I expected Kidder here tonight, and have been down to the tavern to see if he was there; but no smiling countenance met mine. When I am writing to you, or studying, or reading, I feel tolerably cheerful; but just at dusk, to sit in my room alone and think of home, I soon begin to feel my heart rising into my mouth; then a flood of tears is my only relief.

Tell Papa that I am studying Cicero, and that I have got to the fourth book of Virgil.

I must leave a little space for the news that the girls told me I must write. So adieu.

Yours affectionately,

JOHN NOYES.

N. B.—Handwriting superexcellent.

When John was ten years old, his father began to carry out his plan of retiring from business, and proposed that the family move to some place having greater educational advantages than Dummerston. Amherst, where the four older children were then attending school, and New Haven were for a time favorably considered as possibilities. Mrs. Noyes at once perceived that this question involved the religious as well as the intellectual welfare of her children, and unwilling to rely for a solution on human wisdom alone gave herself up to special prayer on the subject for three months. When at length, in deference largely to her wishes, the choice fell upon

Putney, Vermont, a town on the Connecticut River, convenient to Brattleboro, and the home of several educated families of high social standing with whom the Noyeses were already acquainted, but more than all the scene of recent fervent religious revivals, she felt assured that the decision had been determined by an all-wise Providence. A dignified, commodious mansion with farm adjoining was purchased from Captain Benjamin Smith, a merchant and leading man of the town, and in December 1822 the family moved into their new home.

Soon after this John was sent to the Brattleboro Academy to complete his preparation for college.

In April 1823 the first George W., John's younger brother and nearest mate, was taken seriously ill. When it appeared as if George could not live, John was sent for. His sister Mary remembered seeing him coming up the walk crying. The crisis passed, however, and John went back to school. A few days later John, now eleven years old, wrote to his mother: day, because it is Sunday, and I have more time than any other day. I have written but little in my diary, and want to have you write to me about George, so that I can write in it. . . . We play here considerably; I don't know but more than would be for our advantage."

About the first of June 1823 George died; and the name of the youngest son of the family, then a baby six months old, who had been christened "William," was changed to "George W."

One Saturday afternoon, when John was twelve

years old, he was walking home to Putney from Brattleboro with another boy of his age. By wading West River, which empties into the Connecticut, they could considerably shorten the distance. But when they got into the current, it was deeper than they expected, and they had all they could do to keep on their feet and pull safe across. They were frightened, and on reaching the opposite shore John told his companion, he thought they ought to kneel down and thank God that they were safe.

From an early age John was an ardent lover of sport. A letter from his sister Joanna, written during a vacation when he was thirteen years old, alludes to him as "hunting, fishing and riding all the time."

Almost the only other glimpse we have of him during his grammar school days is in a letter from his "chum" Kidder Green, in which he is referred to as a "moving skeleton," and "inclined to give way a little too much to the *libido corporis.*"

In September 1826, a few days after he passed his fifteenth birthday, John entered Dartmouth College. He was destined at first for Yale, and even went so far as to provide himself with a standing collar of peculiar cut, which at that time was worn by all Yale students. But Mrs. Noyes came to the conclusion that Dartmouth would be better for his morals, so to Dartmouth he was sent; and he says that all through his freshman year his Yale standing collar was a "standing joke."

On arriving at Hanover John was taken ill; and his father, who had accompanied him, to allay the anxiety of the folks at home wrote thus:

"You and the children have no occasion to be alarmed by my tarrying here after Capt. Green's return. John has entered college, and is very agreeably located at Madam Brown's, a widow of the former President. Dr. Muzzy says there is no reason for my staying here at all, but as John has had some febrile symptoms, and my leaving him in a strange place might depress his spirits, which are pretty good now, I thought I might as well remain a little longer. I find so much pleasure in seeing the place, and renewing old acquaintances, that I might remain here for some time yet without any other inducement."

Within a few days John recovered sufficiently to take up his college work. From a letter written home a little later, it is evident that the Dartmouth curriculum in 1826 left little time for boys to misuse. He writes:

"Up at five. Go to prayers at a quarter after. Then immediately go to recitation. Then have breakfast. Then study till eleven, when we recite in Graeca Majora, which takes up an hour. Then until one we employ ourselves as we please. At one we take dinner, then study till four, when we recite in the grammar, which takes an hour also. At a quarter before six we go to prayers, which with supper takes up the time till dark, leaving us only three-fourths of an hour in the evening to get our lesson in Livy for the next morning."

Replying October second his mother says:

"I have felt a good deal of anxiety about your health, and do still. You must not indulge yourself in anything that will injure you. Be careful, and your early rising will, I hope, be a benefit to you. . . . We

all hope you will endeavor to improve your advantages. You know how solicitous your father is that you should be diligent in your studies. I am no less solicitous that you should adopt such a course in everything as shall terminate well in the end of all."

And Mary, John's oldest sister, adds on the same sheet:

"Do not forget to attend to your personal appearance, your manners, your studies, etc. Write a list of your clothes in your memorandum book, and do not let them get scattered. Papa wishes you to have a letter always ready to send by private conveyance, as you may have opportunity. We will do the same."

There is one letter at this period in which John's mother expresses the earnest hope that he will become a minister; and one to which his father appends this brief but characteristic note:

"Your studies previous to this year were like laying the foundations of a building. The languages, grammar, logic and rhetoric will be helps in selecting proper materials, fitting them into shapes, putting them together with close and compact joints, and embellishing the whole with painting and ornaments. Mathematics, chemistry, philosophy and astronomy are calculated to teach you the just proportions of the edifice —how to divide it into appropriate apartments, and give to the whole loftiness and grandeur. I trust that what I have written may serve to elevate your ideas of education, and admonish you that your aim must be at a lofty mark; and it is to be hoped that you will divest yourself of every notion and habit which will retard your flight."

Notwithstanding a wealth of exhortation and advice in letters from home, few details of John's life during his first two and a half years in college can be gleaned from extant records. His own letters were infrequent, and not especially remarkable. On one occasion a favorable report of his scholarship and behavior from an indirect source brought cheer to his parents' hearts; and a letter from Dean Shurtleff dated August 20, 1827, pictures him from the standpoint of the faculty in the following terms:

"I am happy to inform you that your son has been steady, and so far as I know *studious*. At my recitations he acquitted himself well, and I am informed by his Tutor that he does so in other branches. He certainly has a sound and discriminating mind, and with such habits of study as I trust he will cultivate, there is little danger but he will graduate a respectable scholar, and with the blessing of God become a pillar in society."

In the latter part of 1827, when sixteen years of age, John came under a religious influence more powerful than any he had yet experienced. It will be recalled that the Noyes mansion at Putney was purchased from a Captain Benjamin Smith. Shortly after selling out at Putney, Captain Smith moved to Gouverneur, New York, taking with him two nephews, Henry and Hervey Smith, who had been known at Putney as rough, bad boys. About two years later Charles G. Finney, the revivalist, then at the beginning of his career, spent six months at Gouverneur, and the town was shaken by a notable revival. Among the converts were Henry

and Hervey Smith. In June 1827 Henry Smith returned to Putney on a visit, and Mrs. Noyes, writing to John, said that she had seldom seen a young man more improved by religion than he. Afterward while John was at home on a vacation the Smiths came to Putney again and commenced a revival campaign. With the zeal and audacity which they had learned from Finney they put religion foremost, not only in meeting but on every occasion, and would not hesitate to stop a stranger in the street with the question, Do you know that you are on the road to hell? The sensation produced in the town was tremendous. John did not yield to their direct assaults, but he always recognized this revival as one of the prime causes of his subsequent conversion.

From the above description and such additional hints as we are able to glean from the contemporary records, we may conclude that until the middle of his junior year in college John's mind and heart were unawakened and gave little promise of the man that was to be.

CHAPTER III

LATER COLLEGE LIFE

In January 1829 John commenced a journal. It is headed: "*Fugitive Pieces,* By the author of etc., etc.," and the introductory paragraph is as follows: "The commencement of a work so important as the above title denotes would seem to require not only an extraordinary effort in the author, but an occasion considerably elevated above the common incidents of human life. In short, as the saying is, I must put my best foot forward, ahem twice, and proceed."

Extracts from College Journal

Jan. 9, 1829.—Riches, fame, and pleasure are the three great objects of pursuit in life, and many and various are the ways in which they are sought; but if a few simple maxims were attended to, and in all cases made the guidance of men's conduct, they would be oftener attained. "Look well to your pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves," is a rule of universal application in the pursuit of wealth, and is not incompatible with true liberality and nobleness of soul. "Study human nature, and govern yourself accordingly," is a maxim equally comprehensive with regard to fame, and without which in the common walks of life no man can rise to distinction. And here

I speak not with regard to those professions which do not require, but rather exclude intercourse with mankind, for in such cases it is plain that but little knowledge of human nature will suffice. Although those who seek for riches and fame think they shall thereby enhance their own happiness, there is still another maxim which must guide those who would lead a happy life: "Whatever may be your lot, strive to be content," is the only solid basis of real happiness, and applies equally well to men in every situation and condition.

Jan. 10, 1829.—My classmate W—— is one of your real pompous *boobies*. Without talents, learning or wit, he assumes all the dignity of manner, and affects all the superiority, and as I may say magnanimity of aspect, which we naturally attribute to those who really possess the above qualities. He is unsocial and misanthropic without possessing a single one of those better qualities which usually palliate and remove the curse from misanthropy. He is niggardly of his own, but liberal of other people's money, and in proof of this I may truly say that I have frequently seen him engage heart and hand in a *jolly scrape,* but never knew him to have his wallet about him when the bills were to be paid.

The same description will nearly apply to L——, but it needs to be extended. He is more of a pedant; possesses more self-conceit; is far less liberal in his views of men and things. His whole soul seems to be devoted to his own advancement. If he undertakes to converse with you, it is obvious to the most careless observer that his whole object is to display his

conversational powers and his learning. Now, I love to see a person occasionally cast off the mask of dignity and ceremony, and give himself up to the entertainment of his fellows.

April 24, 1829.

> I hate garrulity and self-conceit,
> And vain display of learning or of wit,
> Where'er I meet it. But a greater curse
> (In man 'tis bad enough, in woman worse)
> Is that affected modesty called cold reserve,
> Which holds in stiff subjection every nerve,
> Ties down the tongue to merely "Yes" or "No,"
> And chokes the fountains whence kind feelings flow.
> And this vile canker-worm, this deadly pest
> To every joy that's kindled in the breast,
> Is called by some "good breeding," and by some
> Is named "politeness." By my halidom!
> What good it breeds, or where its merits lay,
> 'Twould match the far-famed Oedipus to say.

I am a fool! And why? Because I cannot conquer a habit which will be my ruin! To relieve the reader's anxiety I will premise that this habit is not tobacco-chewing nor dram-drinking. It is that infernal diffidence, natural or acquired, which makes me when in company appear to myself and to everybody else a stupid dunce. Oh! for a brazen front and nerves of steel! I swear by Jove, I will be impudent! So unreasonable and excessive is my bashfulness that I fully believe I could face a battery of cannon with less trepidation than I could a room full of ladies with whom I was unacquainted.

I can feel my cheek burn with shame frequently when I ruminate upon occurrences occasioned by this plague of my life. For example, at a late wedding party I was commissioned to introduce a number of gentlemen to a number of ladies, and I performed the ceremony with decent grace until I came to Mrs. David Crawford, and then I was nonplussed. I could not recollect her name upon the instant, and knowing her to be a Campbell by her look, I introduced her as such. I saw a scornful smile pass over the countenance of a certain lady who sat near, and I immediately perceived my mistake; and so great was my mortification that I could not behave afterwards with tolerable politeness. Perhaps I shall not be credited when I say, I wished myself a hermit or a savage.

I believe that in the contest between the mind and the body the same thing happens which we observe in every other conflict, viz., the conqueror is animated by the victory and thenceforward gains more and more strength and more and more relative superiority, while the conquered, dispirited by defeat, declines a second strife and gradually dwindles away. Of this I have a daily example before my eyes in the case of a person who has been my playmate, schoolmate and boon companion from my childhood. He was once as lively, as sensitive, and as intelligent as any of his youthful contemporaries; but the transition from boyhood to manhood, which usually determines the bent of future life, was a miserable though imperceptible change. Sense gained the mastery over intellect, and has since been gradually limiting and contracting its sphere until it would almost seem the Promethean

spark was in peril of being actually extinguished. When the mouth is sluggish in utterance, but active and noisy in eating, you may write its owner a fool.

Feb. 15, 1830.—It must be confessed that I have access to a sufficient diversity of company to enable me to pass my leisure hours with profit and pleasure. If I am in a merry, indolent mood, I have only to descend the stairs and throw myself upon P——'s bed, and enjoy merriment and indolence to my heart's content. With L—— I can converse upon philosophical subjects; with E—— upon literary and sentimental topics; with N—— I can dispute upon religion. I can talk politics, and enjoy the pleasure of secretly laughing at egotism with M——; and with S—— (by the way, the cleverest fellow in my class), I can enjoy a really comfortable, sociable conversation upon any subject.

Feb. 18, 1830.—As a proof that I am noted for cheerfulness, it is sufficient to adduce the fact that two patients sorely afflicted with the hypo have applied to me today for consolation. I advised them never to read Byron, never to think of suicide, and above all to repeat every five minutes: "Faint heart never won fair lady."

Feb. 24, 1830.—I play checkers with everybody, and everybody beats me. Well, we'll see what perseverence will do.

Feb. 28, 1830.—W—— and I have been on remarkably good terms of late, and as he goes by extremes both in affability and haughtiness, we have had a wonderfully jolly, sociable time of it. This "cheek by jowl" excitement has somewhat subsided today, and

the consequence is that I am inclined to be homesick. This circumstance has impressed me very strongly with the necessity of a person's having resources of enjoyment within himself, and with the misery of those who depend wholly upon social excitement for the pleasures of life.

Mar. 19, 1830.—I begin to consider myself a man of fashion since I have purchased my bell-bottomed pantaloons, square-toed boots, patent leather stock, and pyramid-formed hat. I imagine that a handsome dress actually has some tendency to elevate the mind.

April 1, 1830.—I used to be vexed with my father for confining me so rigidly to my studies, but now I feel nothing but gratitude.

April 13, 1830.—I am afraid, when I shall "no longer bask in the bright sunbeams of literary glory," I shall find no one to supply W——'s place. He is a philosopher, and as I am of a stoical cast of mind we are to each other congenial spirits. We walk together, lounge together, sleep together; and are constantly discussing with philosophical coolness, and I must say acuteness, the subjects which chance to catch our attention, and these I can assure the reader are not few. Our walk of three miles after breakfast gives occasion for the scintillation of numerous sapient ideas, and considering all things I deem it by far the most pleasant and profitable exercise of the day.

In a letter to his father dated March 31, 1829, John reported that he stood eighth in the list of "Junior Appointees," and added: "I intend to have an Oration when I graduate, that is, if study will effect anything." He made good in this resolve. His oration,

however, was in English, not in Latin or Greek—which means that he fell short of the highest honors.

In a journal entry dated October 1830 about two months after his graduation he thus reviews the latter part of his college career:

"The changes which the external world is constantly undergoing have been descanted on from time immemorial by all classes of writers, from the philosopher to the school-boy. But my own experience convinces me that the changes which are wrought upon the mind of every individual as he passes through the stages of childhood, youth, manhood, maturity and age are incomparably worthier of attention. The number of these changes deserves notice. It may be that I have less stability of character than most men; but I must confess that my views of men and things change so often and so essentially even in the course of a single year, that I almost lose all acquaintance with myself. I will endeavor for experiment's sake to trace these changes for the last year.

First, I was simple and credulous; averse to all society, especially that of the opposite sex; consequently unpopular. I studied because it was my duty, and not from any fondness for the employment. Fishing and hunting and ease were the *summa bona* of my existence.

Suddenly the stamp of my character was completely changed. I became ambitious of popularity. I studied human nature and learned to live with men. I looked deeply and eagerly into the secrets of phi-

losophy. My views embraced a wider scope than hith-

Now science began to have attractions in herself.

erto; and I panted after *eminence in learning* as the height of human felicity.

Another change came over my spirit. Its details would be tedious. It is sufficient to say that I sought happiness and distinction in *philosophic stoicism.* The fit lasted but a brief space, and next I found myself seeking the bright phantom in the mazes of dissipation. Another revolution placed me on far higher ground. Virtue, honor, and the dictates of conscience stood preëminent in my estimation as the guarantee of happiness."

CHAPTER IV

LAW STUDIES

The year following his graduation from college John spent at Chesterfield, New Hampshire, studying law in the office of his brother-in-law, Larkin G. Mead. There was in the village an academy attended by eighty or ninety boys and girls, around which a succession of balls and parties naturally centered. As John and his classmate Putnam (who was also studying in Mr. Mead's office) were college graduates, they were looked upon as leaders, and had frequent opportunities to join in these gayeties.

Extracts from Diary

October 8, 1830.—"Cousin Oliver" informed Put and me that he and his fair cousins had received an invitation to spend the evening and eat some peaches at Mr. Pierce's. "And shall *we* spend this evening in the solitude and smoke of Esquire Mead's office?" said Put. "Cursed be the thought!" was the response. We each made a paddle, and bent our course for the lake. Put, being acquainted with the family, unceremoniously entered the house. "Esquire Pierce, how did matters go with you at Keene?" "Oh, nicely, nicely." "I knew 'twould be so. Nobody undertakes to overreach you without faring the worse for it. But,



MARY (NOYES) MEAD

Esquire Pierce, I was coming up with Mr. Noyes to take a ride on the lake, and I thought I would call to see if Larkin sent any word by you." "Why, no, he didn't." "Well, I thought I would just inquire. Good day." "Stop a minute, Mr. Putnam. We are going to have a little party here tonight to eat peaches, and I should be glad to have you spend the evening with us; also Mr. Noyes." "Well, I'll endeavor to come with Mr. Noyes." And so indeed we did. We had a delightful walk to Mr. Pierce's, a delightful evening, and a delightful walk home—all in the company of the ladies boarding at Dr. Baker's.

An Original.—Ephraim Crouch was a man of few words and many smiles. It will be long ere I forget the soft simper and the noiseless tread with which he was wont to enter the office. He would reply to our salutations in a voice subdued and scarcely audible, and as he skulked into the darkest corner of the room I never could help thinking of the applicability of his name. Yes, "crouch" was the word of all others most expressive of his character. Hour after hour he would sit silent and simpering behind the door, and all the while, so great was his bashfulness, the utmost stretch of his audacity never extended farther than to a transfer of his legs from one to the other of the usual Yankee positions.

We often amused ourselves with his conversation, and our merriment frequently ran so high that in order to disguise its object we were obliged to have recourse to sundry ingenious devices, often leading him to think by some incoherent talk that we were laughing at certain ludicrous allusions unknown to him, and some-

times flattering him with the idea that our excessive mirth was caused by the pungency of his wit. . . .

To do Crouch justice, he was minutely versed in all the common branches of schoolmaster learning. Besides he was a man of unbounded good-humor, ever ready to accommodate his neighbor, never known to harbor malice, free from fickleness, vanity and envy; in short according to the abilities which nature had bestowed upon him he was without spot or blemish.

Nov. 19, 1830.—Three months of mingled mirth and misery are gone, and with them are gone—various things—no matter what. I came here expecting to enjoy everything that society could furnish, and (thanks to the depravity of human nature) society has been a constant source of misery to me. I found here Smith and his cousins, and my first acquaintance with them surely did not in any measure dissipate the illusive expectations which I had formed. Their beauty and their vivacity equally conspired to elicit admiration. I was delighted—bewitched. In short my fancy was wrought up to such a pitch that I imagined I had at length found that perfection for which I had hitherto sought in vain. Put and I were among the gods for a week. I pretended to study Blackstone, but my thoughts and eyes held no communion. Any one considering the subjects of my meditations by day and my dreams by night might reasonably conclude that I was happy; but the true state of the case was far different. If excitement is the essence of happiness, I was superlatively happy; but impatience of absence from those seraphs, jealousy of my competitors in gallantry, and the dolorous reflection that the school

would close in thirteen weeks were constantly dragging me down from the pinnacle of felicity which seemed to be almost within my reach. . . .

Upon a review of the preceding campaign I discern many points in which I have erred, and I therefore commit it to paper, that by occasionally refreshing my mind with its events I may be furnished with examples for correction and reproof in future scenes.

It must not be supposed that John, while at Chesterfield, gave himself up wholly to amusement. On the contrary Mr. Mead in a letter dated Nov. 9, 1830, says: "John and Putnam study as for their lives, and are great in the Law." Three weeks later John writes in his diary: "Yesterday I made my debut as an advocate, and a most shabby performance it was. I was frightened beyond all reasonable bounds. I stammered and trembled, and for a few minutes was utterly unable to fabricate a decent concatenation of words. It is true, before I had finished I had disfurnished myself of a portion of my trepidation; but still the conclusion of the whole matter is, that (in the taunting words of 'Squire Spaulding) I 'did not plead worth a damn!' However, when I consider the disadvantage under which I labored, my speech being wholly unpremeditated, although I must bear the curse of other people's contempt, still my opinion of myself has suffered no incurable deterioration."

Throughout his boyhood John had been held in check socially not merely by his inveterate bashfulness, but by the conviction that he was personally unattractive. He had red hair and freckles, and thought of

himself as like the "Black Dwarf" in the story—so ugly that no one would ever care for him. Consequently he had resigned himself to the fate of remaining unmarried, and had made up his mind to be a philosopher. But during his residence at Chesterfield he acquired greater social freedom, and presently he was thrilled by the discovery that he was not like the "Black Dwarf" after all. Among the students in the academy was a young woman named Caroline M——, toward whom he was strongly attracted. The friendship which sprang up between them is reflected in the following stanzas copied from his diary:

An Invitation to an Evening Walk

Mark, Caroline, yon western sky,
  Deep-tinged in crimson light.
The sun's red glories haste to die,
  And swift comes on the night.

Now turn again, and mark yon star
  Dim twinkling in the east.
See, just above the dark belt where
  The sun's domain has ceased.

Then hasten, ere the twilight ends.
  Far down the vale we'll roam,
Nor pause till o'er us night descends,
  Then Love shall light us home!

Toward the end of the school year it became necessary for Caroline to return to her home, and John was thrown into deep distress. He was strongly tempted to make her an offer of marriage. After

some hard thinking, however, he made up his mind that she was not the woman he would choose for a life companion. Realizing that her departure would be a highly emotional occasion, he doubted himself and the consequences of a parting interview. He cut the Gordian knot by taking his cane and running away home to Putney. Caroline soon left the village, and he never saw her again.

CHAPTER V

CONVERSION TO RELIGION

A momentous change! John had marveled at the changes through which he passed during his senior year in college. Now comes another change so revolutionary that it made September 1831 seem ever afterward the beginning of the life that really counted.

The year 1831 is known in the religious annals of America as the year of "the great awakening." There had been religious revivals before, but none so great as the one that shook the country in the years 1831 to 1834.

The first noteworthy revival in America took place in about 1740 under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards. Though limited in the area directly affected, it struck deeply into American life for an entire generation. During the American and French revolutions, however, the new religious life was temporarily overshadowed by European deism. When Lyman Beecher was at Yale in 1794, Voltaire, Rosseau and Paine were the idols of the students.

But Lyman Beecher himself started a reaction toward religion, which carried the church to a higher level than ever before. Graduating from the Yale Theological Seminary in 1798, intellectual, earnest, enthusiastic, masterful, his long career as preacher and

teacher was an almost unbroken trail of brilliant revivals. The most important of these were at East Hampton, Long Island, in the years 1807-1810, at Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1813-1825, and at Boston, Massachusetts, in 1826-1831.

The next noted revivalist was Dr. Asahel Nettleton. Like Beecher he was a graduate of the Yale Theological Seminary, but unlike him he was lacking in physical vigor, and his disposition was of the gentle, persuasive type. Nevertheless his success as a revivalist was phenomenal. During the fourteen years from 1812 to 1826 his preaching was attended by fervent revivals in upwards of thirty cities and towns in Connecticut, besides a dozen or more places in the vicinity of Albany, New York, and the adjacent parts of Massachusetts, and in several towns in Virginia.

In 1824 cames Charles G. Finney, the greatest revivalist of the period. He commenced his career at Adams, New York. Trained as a lawyer, eloquent, passionate, magnetic, he swept all before him. Jefferson, Oneida, and Herkimer Counties were soon aflame, and came to be known as "the burnt district." At Rome, New York, nearly the entire adult population were converted in a campaign of twenty days. At Rochester in 1830 a great majority of the leading men and women were converted, and the character of the city was permanently changed. Similar revivals took place at Gouverneur, Utica, Auburn, Troy, Buffalo, Wilmington, Providence, Boston and New York.

Inspired by the example of Beecher, Nettleton and Finney a host of workers entered the field. More effective measures for reaching the irreligious were intro-

duced, such as protracted meetings, coöperation of laymen, and urgent personal appeals and prayers. These forces resulted in spreading the enthusiasm over a constantly widening area. Lawyers, physicians, merchants, and young men just out of college were foremost among the converts. It was estimated that in the year 1830 alone one hundred thousand persons joined the church. Multitudes believed that the millennium was about to commence.

In September 1831 John had completed a year of law study in the office of his brother-in-law, Larkin G. Mead, and was looking forward eagerly to a year of study and practice with his uncle at Brattleboro. He had deliberately resolved, he says, "to indulge the lust of the eye and the pride of life for the present, and risk the consequences; in short, to jump the life to come." Within a week he was completely transformed; and within six weeks he was at Andover as ardent in the study of theology as he had been in that of the law. His own account of this change written in his diary is as follows:*

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*Noyes was a man whom psychologists would call a "religious genius." His religious experience was fervent and original, like that of Martin Luther, John Bunyan, George Fox. No better analysis of it can be given than that contained in the following paragraphs from William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience:*

"There can be no doubt that as a matter of fact a religious life, exclusively pursued, does tend to make the person exceptional and eccentric. I speak not now of your ordinary religious believer, who follows the conventional observances of his country, whether it be Buddhist, Christian or Mohammedan. His religion has been made for him by others, communicated to him by tradition, determined to fixed forms by imitation, and retained by habit. It would profit us little to study this second-hand religious life. We must make search rather for

I was at Glens Falls on a visit when I first began to ascertain the determination of my own mind as to the impropriety of a four-days meeting. I knew that such a meeting was to commence in Putney on the 13th, and I felt a dread of being present at it. I looked upon religion, at least I endeavored to do so, as a sort

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the original experiences which were the pattern-setters to all this mass of suggested feeling and imitated conduct. These experiences we can only find in individuals for whom religion exists not as a dull habit, but as an acute fever rather. But such individuals are 'geniuses' in the religious line; and like many other geniuses who have brought forth fruits effective enough for commemoration in the pages of biography, such religious geniuses have often shown symptoms of nervous instability. Even more perhaps than other kinds of genius, religious leaders have been subject to abnormal psychical visitations. Invariably they have been creatures of exalted emotional sensibility. Often they have led a discordant inner life, and had melancholy during a part of their career. They have known no measure, been liable to obsessions and fixed ideas; and frequently they have fallen into trances, heard voices, seen visions, and presented all sorts of peculiarities which are ordinarily classed as pathological. Often, moreover, these pathological features in their career have helped to give them their religious authority and influence. . . .

"When a superior intellect and a psychopathic temperament coalesce in the same individual, we have the best possible condition for effective genius. Such men do not remain mere critics and understanders with their intellect. Their ideas possess them, they inflict them, for better or worse, upon their companions or their age. . . .

"In the psychopathic temperament we have the emotionality which is the *sine qua non* of moral perception; we have the intensity and tendency to emphasis which are the essence of practical moral vigor; and we have the love of metaphysics and mysticism which carry one's interests beyond the surface of the sensible world. What then is more natural than that this temperament should introduce one to regions of religious truth which your robust, Philistine type of nervous system . . . would be sure to hide forever from its self-satisfied possessors? If there were such a thing as inspiration from a higher realm, it might well be that the neurotic temperament would furnish the chief condition of the requisite receptivity." Pp. 6-7, 23-25.

of phrenzy to which all were liable, and feared lest I should be caught in the snare. However, my aversion to it was such, and my love of the pleasures of the world so strong, that I concluded to yield to the force of circumstances which seemed to summon me to the spot; and trusting in my own strength to resist the assaults of the Lord I attended the meeting on the 14th. I knew that Mother was exceedingly anxious that I should receive the word, but I told her plainly that she would be disappointed. She asked me why I went, and I replied, to please her. However, I think that curiosity and perhaps a twinge of my own conscience were among the motives which led me thither.

My recollections of the impressions produced on me the first day are indistinct; they were probably similar to those produced by ordinary sabbath exercises. The second day passed off in a like manner, until those who desired the prayers of God's people were called out. The thought occasioned by the scene gave me much uneasiness, and I was prevented from presenting myself only by the thought that, when the excitement had subsided, I should throw off my impressions, and should thus expose myself to ridicule.

During the last day there was a solemnity on my spirit. It seemed to me that I must make up my mind whom I would serve, and I determined to brace myself for the conflict. The consideration which weighed most with me was that religion would make it necessary for me to quit the law and take to divinity; and for that time this consideration prevailed. I concluded to wait. Satan frequently suggested to me that I should live to see the millennium, and be brought in

of course. As the repetition of the ceremony of calling out the anxious had destroyed its novelty, its effect on the last day was not sufficient to humble my proud heart.

On Saturday, the day succeeding the meeting, there remained a sort of solemnity upon my mind; but I was calm—calm as a soldier in the day of battle. I had deliberately made up my mind to continue at war with God. On Sunday I went to meeting in the morning, and heard a sermon directed particularly to the church, little calculated to stir up the tumult of mind which was fast subsiding.

In the afternoon I was almost sick with a cold, and stayed at home. I took medicine and went to bed, and when the house was empty and all was still, the thought came suddenly and forcibly into my mind that I never should have a more favorable time for submitting to God. The severity of my cold suggested to me the idea of the uncertainty of life, and also seemed to be sent for the purpose of keeping me at home for a few days till I could humble myself. These thoughts pressed so hard upon me that I felt as if the crisis had come, and my destiny was to be decided. I then, after some hard thinking, determined to obtain religion, and immediately set about conquering my pride. The first duty which presented itself was that of overcoming my fear of man, and though it was like cutting off a right hand God enabled me to resolve and to execute the resolution of communicating to Mother my determination.

After resolving to relate to my mother my feelings, I pondered in my mind as to what would probably be

her advice, and from former experience I knew that she would bid me resort to prayer. I then determined to anticipate her, and actually bent my knees and offered up an incoherent, heartless petition. I laid before her my case and the steps I had taken, and she seemed disposed to leave me entirely to myself.

From this time the means which I used were simply to go by myself at stated seasons, and force myself to meditate on the character of God, his goodness, his holiness, the requirements of his word, my own heathenish neglect of them, and the absolute necessity of seeking his favor. At times it seemed to me that I had lost the ground I had gained, and I felt indifferent and disposed to give up the matter; but the thought, that truth was entirely independent of my vacillating feelings and that the things of God were still as true and momentous as ever, continually drove me back to the conflict which I had begun. Several times in the course of the following day I read the Bible, prayed and meditated, until I actually sweat; and still I was calm and dispassionate. I shed no tears; I felt no disposition to mourn on account of sin; and this lack of usual sensibility troubled me exceedingly.

In the course of the afternoon of Monday I read the Bible to Mother. The passage was Rom. 10:6-10,* and while I read it I made an effort to apply it to myself. From that time my anxiety diminished. Before night I had become so far tranquil that I began se-

* "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

riously to fear the return of my former stupidity. Accordingly the next day I set about my old work of forcing myself into convictions with renewed vigor; but I could not succeed in producing that feeling of despair which I had felt before, though my fears still prevented me from enjoying myself. When I surveyed and compared my spiritual views, I found to my surprise an entire reversal of my tastes and affections. The Bible seemed a new treasure of precious thought; Christians seemed kindred spirits; the matters of God and of eternity seemed alone worth attention. When at last I was told by an experienced Christian that these were evidences of conversion, I was enabled to lay hold on the promises. Light gleamed upon my soul in a different way from what I expected. It was dim and almost imperceptible at first, but in the course of the day it attained meridian splendor. Ere the day was done I had concluded to devote myself to the service and ministry of God. It were an endless task to enumerate the thoughts which passed through my mind during several succeeding days. They were, as usual in such cases, ecstatic. I had abundance of good counsel, and from it by the blessing of God received an impetus in the Christian race which I trust I shall never lose.

John, like his mother, could do nothing by halves. When his mother was urging him to attend the meeting, his reply was: "No, I do not wish to be hurried. When I get religion it will not be in a hurry." But having once yielded to religion, he threw his whole soul into it. With much joy and zeal he took up the

study of the Bible. That he must abandon the law and become a minister he assumed as a matter of course, and at once commenced the preparatory Hebrew studies required for entrance in the Andover Theological Seminary. He entered fully into the expectation of the times that the reign of Christ on earth was at hand, and resolved to live or die for it. Seeing no reason why there should be any diminution in the vividness and ardor of his religious feelings, he vowed with all his inward strength that he would be a "young convert" forever. Meanwhile to his friends in private and to all who would hear him in public meetings he declared his new-found faith.

The change wrought by his conversion is indicated by a number of interpolations in his diary. After an entry which savored of the world he writes: "*Sic quondam, aliter nunc!*" Again: "Hitherto the world, henceforth God!" In another place: "Vanity of vanity!" At the end of the poem *An Invitation to an Evening Walk,* quoted in the last chapter, he writes: "These three verses cost me an hour of labor. How much better would that hour have been spent in framing a hymn of praise to God! How much nobler a theme! What an abundance of ideas! What will be the happiness of heaven, when we shall be able to express our gratitude to God without the painful efforts which a trivial song costs us in this grovelling world! *Deo volente,* henceforth I will employ my poetic abilities in his praise." Below the description of his début as an advocate he interpolates: "This was the first, and probably will be the last of my labors in the law. I shall never again enter into the feelings which

accompanied this first effort. I look back to them as a man, who has done with this world and is preparing to die, looks back to the worldly pursuits to which he has given his heart. They seem like the senseless eagerness of children for the toys and trifles of an hour. May I ever despise them as I do now!"

CHAPTER VI

LIFE AT ANDOVER

Extracts from Diary

July 1, 1832.—On the 18th of September 1831 I hope I gave my heart to God. There was much of delight and, as I view the case now, much of sin in my first spiritual exercises. I became so much absorbed in meditation on the goodness of God and on the novelty of my situation, that my mind seemed to lose its faculty of self-control, and I was for several days at the mercy of my imagination. My physical system sank under the intensity and protraction of the discipline, and I was forced to divert my mind by every means in my power from reflection on religious subjects. In this fact I can see a reason for the spiritual declension which succeeded, and which maintained its dominion over me during the following winter.

I determined from the first to become by the permission of Providence a minister of the gospel, and commenced soon the study of Hebrew. My health was such as forbade much application or much effort of any kind, and accordingly I came to Andover on the first of November unprepared to enter the Seminary, and in a state of spiritual desolation. However my health improved by the diet and exercise of the Seminary, and in four weeks I was admitted to the class

and began to feel somewhat encouraged in regard to religious matters. My habits of devotion were irregular, and I just contrived to live along, as I may say, from hand to mouth, with my understanding convinced but my heart and practical principles at variance with it. I meditated much on divine things, but to little profit.

On the 25th of December, while on my knees in prayer, I devoted myself to the missionary cause, and then after a long interval of darkness once more held sweet communion with God. From this time my standard of Christian duty and responsibility began to rise, and the thought for the first time began to develop itself that I must habitually live entirely for the service of God.

After a season of considerable spiritual enjoyment I began again to sink. There seemed to be a general declension in the Seminary. Disputes, excitements, levity, and trifling with Scripture and sacred things became exceedingly prevalent amongst us, and the Holy Spirit was grieved away. I seemed under a constraint to float with the current, and lost much of my spirituality and love of prayer and meditation.

About the last of April, after a tedious session of six months, I returned home. There I had leisure and solitude, and in view of my backslidden state and as a preparation for uniting with the church I gave myself up very much to devotional exercises. I found much enjoyment in this, and I trust my views were profitably enlarged.

On the 13th of May I made a public profession of religion. With the new responsibilities of my situa-

tion I made new resolutions of devotedness to God, and determined no longer to live at the low-rate piety which is so common in the Christian church.

I returned to Andover on the 29th of May, resolved to commence a new and independent course of life—to set myself against the current of unhallowed levity, which during the previous term threatened to sweep away the last vestige of piety from among us. By the blessing of God I was enabled to begin, and I found a satisfaction in confessing my sins, and expressing to some of my classmates, especially my roommate, my determination in regard to my future course. I found others who could sympathize with me in opposition to the prevailing sins of the Seminary, and a prayer meeting was established with a view to effecting our purpose. I have enjoyed much in those meetings, and we trust our prayers in some measure have been answered.

Having sounded the minds of my friends at home in regard to my becoming a missionary, and finding no formidable opposition, I no longer felt any hesitation about declaring my intentions, and I now feel that I am indeed set apart for that work. I have promised before God, angels and men that I will hold myself ready to go into the foreign service when and where I shall be called. May I never regret the promise, though it leads me to the stake!

July 1, 1832, Sabbath.—My health is unexpectedly improved, and I was able to attend and enjoy the exercises of God's house, but dared not exercise my mind much for fear of a return of my nervous difficulties. In this state of body it is almost impossible for a sin-

ner of my stamp to live near to God. Nevertheless I was enabled to watch my heart, and to feel a tenderness of conscience which is always refreshing.

July 4.—Was greatly troubled about my state by reading the account of Brainerd's conversion and President Edward's reflections upon it. My religion is of too dubious a character to afford me much comfort, and yet my health is so poor that I cannot conscientiously impose upon myself the effort which is necessary to faithful self-examination, though I would most gladly make it, if my body would bear it. How desperately miserable must be the state of those who postpone all consideration of the subject of religion till weakness and pain warn them of death!

July 8, Sabbath.—Read the Bible with unusual relish this morning, and could not refrain from blessing God for the gift of so precious a book. Oh, that I might have more of its spirit! I do not love Christ with that sensible affection which I know ought to fill my soul to overflowing. I have not those desires for the salvation of souls which seem so reasonable. I have not that sense of my own sinfulness which the Bible commands, and that unbending abhorrence of everything opposed to holiness which God requires. I fear there is much hypocrisy in my conversation on these subjects. I express the dictates of conscience and understanding as the feelings of my heart. I pass off for zeal that which perhaps desire of applause produces. O God! Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

July 9.—I remained in a tender and prayerful frame during the day, but in the evening engaged in unprofit-

able and wicked conversation, and thus fell back into a state of darkness and insensibility. Self-examination was a disagreeable task.

July 10.—Today I have groaned under the consequences of my sin of yesterday. Prayer was a burden, and additional sin brought additional darkness and trouble into my soul. In the afternoon I searched the Bible and the library in regard to a question of conscience, and found beyond a doubt that I had been committing a heinous sin. I was never more deeply convicted of my *meanness,* of my desperate wickedness before God, and of my utter impotence to resist temptation. I prayed, I wept; and I trust God gave me repentance. Oh, that I could set up a monument on this spot, which should evermore remind me of my promises before God!

July 12.—Had a miserable night. Dreamed incessantly of the cholera, and found myself in the morning in a state of body little better than might have been produced by an actual attack of that disease. My mind was gloomy at first, but soon assumed a worse position, that of forced, miserable merriment. An excessive dinner dreadfully increased my evils of body and mind. In the afternoon I consulted Edwards on the religious affections, and concluded from his marks of holiness that I must yet be in the gall of bitterness. And still after all, when again I gave myself away to Christ, I could not help trusting that God would yet work in me to will and to do his good pleasure. I groan under the bondage of old habits. I am now in my desires and propensities just what twenty years of wickedness have made me. And my wickedness was

of no ordinary dye. It was in some measure philosophical, calculating; and for that reason the more ruinous. It was spiritual wickedness, and it has interwoven itself with all the elements of my moral nature. I pried into the secrets and curious mysteries of historical and supposable guilt, and imbibed all the poisonous associations of such investigations with relish and delight; and now I reap the fruit, bitter indeed. I cannot send abroad my thoughts in any direction without crossing the track of some polluted image, and a thousand needless suggestions of impurity occur daily to blast my endeavors after holiness.

July 25.—I rejoiced in the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit in my morning devotions. I felt new joy in the thought that "the Lord reigneth," and that he knows all things, and will assuredly do all things right. If God did not know all things, I should be ruined, for I find my wickedness perpetually assuming some new and subtle form, and I must believe there is a labyrinth of iniquity in my heart which would baffle everything short of omniscience. But blessed be God, the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and the Holy Spirit *will* search out and slay every sin. I am unprofitable and barren from day to day, and I would fain impute it to my ill-health; but I fear the disease lies deeper than the body. I *must* try once more to combine spirituality with that cheerfulness which is necessary to health. I have been hearing some of Brother E——'s experience this evening. He says he sometimes feels as if he would prefer to sink into his grave rather than commit the least sin. He is entirely beyond my depth. He is despised even by "The

Brethren" for his recluse habits, but I wish I had more of his self-denial and spirituality.

July 26.—A new resolution is hardly worth mentioning, I have broken so many; but I put it down, that it may sometime administer reproof. I promised before God this night that I would institute a thorough reformation in my Christian practice. May his spirit assist!

July 28.—God granted me (I trust in mercy) a new view of the wickedness of my heart this morning. I had begun to imagine myself full of faith and wholly reconciled to the character and providence of God. I was meditating on the love of Christ expressed in the passage: "My mother and my brethren are these who hear the word of God, and do it." I was trying to measure Christ's affection by that which I know my mother bears towards me. The leaven of pride began to work, and the thought suggested itself to me that all my views are selfish. So I endeavored to try the virtue of my faith by placing some interest of mine in competition with the government of God. I asked myself, Can I consign a certain impenitent friend, for whom I have long prayed, to eternal burnings without murmuring, if it be the will of God? Alas! How quickly was the whole aspect of my soul changed! The peace and blessedness which I had hoped would be perpetual were gone, and rebellion usurped their place. And yet it seemed involuntary rebellion. My wish was to feel a calm, holy, unreserved confidence in God; but I found within me seeds of mutiny which I had not suspected, and I felt that nothing but the spirit which first subdued my heart could overcome this newly dis-

covered enemy. I prayed with agony for deliverance, and finally, though peace was not wholly restored, I could say: "Lord, I will lay hold on Thy hand, and be guided by Thee, though our path shall lie through fire and blood. I will believe in Thy goodness at all events."

July 29, Sabbath.—My trouble for some days past has been this: I fear I think too much about the rewards of heaven. I seem to indulge an unhallowed ambition to stand eminent in the ranks of heaven, and I dislike the thought of death because it will cut me off from an opportunity of laying up a store of good works. This last feeling has given me especial trouble, because it is inconsistent with a perfect resignation to the will of God. I desire to feel, as I shall if I ever get to heaven, that it is a wonder if I escape hell. I shall think more of Christ then.

July 30.—I have thought much of my sins today, especially the sins of my boyish days. When I look back and see what an ocean of impurity and vice I have waded through, I almost wonder I was not cut down, though the mercy of God is infinite. It makes me start and sweat with horror to remember crimes which I committed with exultation, for which the jail should have been my portion. Mischievous thefts and lying were among the most glorious of my boyish exploits, and because there was ludicrous roguery and wit in them, instead of being occasions of disgrace and remorse they were actually matters of boasting. And even my riper years have been marked not merely by general impiety but by positive and shameful crime, which reason as well as conscience condemn. But there

is still an account behind, blacker even than these. Since God has convinced me of his goodness, I have committed over and over again deliberate, flagrant wickedness, and scarcely a day escapes the stain of some heaven-daring sin. This very day, on which I resolved to "keep my heart with all diligence," has sent at least three special messages of wrath to the judgment record, besides the long list of common besetting and negative sins. Pride has been the warp of this day's web. I think I shall say with the martyrs in the day of my death: "None but Christ, none but Christ!"

July 31.—In the afternoon the sweet influences of the spirit of God seemed to be withdrawn in some measure, as if to convince me that I have no moral power of myself. I could remember the blessedness and peace of former seasons, when God seemed near to my soul. I could mourn their absence; I could desire and pray for their return; but my efforts to recover them—to feel right—were plainly impotent. I know that God must work in me to will and to do of his good pleasure, or I shall sink forever.

August 5, Sabbath.—"A day of darkness and of gloominess; a day of clouds and thick darkness." I have not despaired of heaven, but I have had fearful evidence that I must have help from omnipotence if I ever get there. My heart, even if it could be delivered from the curse of active malignity, must forever bear the coldness and insensibility of death without the spirit of God. I have passed through all the interesting exercises and privileges of this day without one warm feeling of love for Christ, gratitude to God, benevolence to man; and all the while I have been chas-

tising myself, in hopes of scourging myself into right feelings. I have known perhaps more clearly than ever before what ought to be the state of my affections, but my heart has exhibited all the barrenness, if not the enmity of impenitence.

I have been wishing today I could devise some new way of sanctification—some patent—some specific for sin, whereby the curse should be exterminated once for all. And in time past I have sometimes thought I had discovered this desirable catholicon; but I always found that just as I thought my disease was cured, it would break out like a cancer in some other spot. Lord, help me to be willing to be saved by Thee.

August 6.—Had a season of sorrow in my morning devotions. In view of the hardness of my heart, and the smallness of the evidence which I have of being regenerated, I could only lie at the foot of the cross, and beg for repentance, for faith, for love. I set apart this day for secret fasting and prayer, and God has blessed my soul. There was a time in the afternoon when I thought I could say, I love God. At any rate there was a tenderness of soul which I always hail as the effect of the Holy Spirit's influences. I had a spirit of prayer for the heathen such as has been a stranger to me for a long time. As I read the *Missionary Herald* I yearned for perishing souls, and longed to be in the field. In the evening I had a singular season of prayer. Being alone I paced the room, and as I meditated on divine things I began to address God, and found it pleasant to commune with him, I trust with reverence, yet in the manner rather of conversation than formal prayer. I talked over my want of

faith and feeling. I drew out and exposed freely all the deceitfulness of my heart which I could lay hands upon, such as humble pride, selfish benevolence, and love of holiness because it is necessary as an evidence of being in a state of justification. I appealed to the omniscience of God for my sincerity, whether my heart was renewed or not. In short I spent an hour as it were in immediate personal conversation with God, and I think I gained strength and encouragement.

August 7.—I have met with divers occasions of special gratitude to God today, but I fear their effect has been to minister to my pride. Any little attentions from those around me which indicate that I am held in favorable estimation among them light up in my bosom an unhallowed flame which hours of chastisement and sorrow cannot quench.

August 11.—Had more evidence today that I am backsliding, and made some struggles against the current. I intend to maintain this struggle till holiness shall become the element of my rational existence; and if I cannot hold a place near enough to Jesus to enable me to *rejoice* in the Lord, I desire I may have grace to plod on my way fighting and mourning.

August 14.—Nothing interesting in my feelings in the forenoon. I was entirely dissatisfied and disgusted with the worldly state of my soul. It is my misery to be able to conceive distinctly how a warm-hearted Christian, how Christ himself would act in my situation, and yet to find myself morally impotent in regard to attaining that ideal standard. Oh, how wretched is an unprayerful frame of mind joined with

a wakeful conscience! O Lord, if thou canst not draw, drive me to Thyself.

August 15.—A sore remembrance of our conversation last night [*i.e.*, a heated discussion with one of the students] remained upon my mind this morning. I fought the battle over again, and saw with mortification how Satan had obtained an advantage over me at every turn. The consequence was humility, or its counterfeit, wounded pride; for I cannot answer for the genuineness of any of the exercises of my heart. I looked back with shame, and forward with gloom. I seemed to be shut up to the Christian path, for in every other direction hell yawns to devour; and yet I groaned at the thought of staggering along in the way I have done, and have the prospect of doing all my life.

August 16.—I was inclined to melancholy today, and my feelings sometimes assumed the posture of positive dissatisfaction with myself and all around me. If charity for the faults of Christians grows with growth in grace, I am backsliding. I cannot help wondering and grieving at the worldliness and pride and unholy ambition, which I see every hour in my brethren. I find too I grow eagle-eyed about such things—a bad sign I fear; so says Brother Nichols, so says President Edwards. I wonder what would become of me, if God were as uncharitable and impatient as I am. I must surely crucify this sin.

August 19, Sabbath.—In the afternoon I tried to repent and humble myself before God, but found again that without help from heaven I am impotent. I thought at one time I had given up everything, and

was willing to live only for God. But when I looked once more at my great pattern, and asked myself what he would do in my situation, I found I had not given up all. Though I might be willing to forego a thousand pleasures, to give up father and mother and brother and sister, to deny myself and crucify my lusts, to fast and pray and study even to the extent of human ability, yet I found myself shrinking back from undertaking that ceaseless activity of benevolence here on the spot, which I knew Christ would exhibit. I can vie with monks in passive piety, but to be an active Christian is another thing.

August 22.—Had a quarrel with myself this morning about an old affair of my imprudence and sin, which came up to my mind in all its freshness and force. I found a proud, angry, self-justifying spirit drawn out by the mere operation of memory and imagination to a most alarming extent. The wickedness and hypocrisy and selfishness also of the motives which govern me in my best actions were set before me in frightful array. I sweat also several times in the course of the day at the remembrance of certain guilty passages in the history of my youth. If God should punish and humble me by divulging them to the world, my cup would be a bitter one indeed. But they will be disclosed to an assembled universe. O Savior of sinners! Canst thou stay the glittering sword of justice? Thou hast found a ransom——

Notwithstanding his seeming impotence in the struggle against sin, John is by no means a fatalist. He has clearly in mind the fact that, since God freely

offers his help to all, salvation can and must be won by individual initiative and effort. "There is nothing in my circumstances," he writes, "nor in the limitation of the grace of God, that would prevent my becoming as holy and devoted a man as St. Paul." Nor does he believe that salvation depends upon ability to grapple with psychological difficulties that are beyond the ken of the ordinary intellect. On the contrary he says: "I cannot believe that the path, which God has declared is so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein, is beset on every hand with metaphysical traps and snares. I believe his grace is free, abundant, and accessible; and self-deception is but insincerity or carelessness, not a calamity resulting from the mystery of God's grace." With these views John cannot give way to discouragement, nor relax his efforts. Though beaten down and almost destroyed time after time in his battle against sin, he nevertheless struggles again to his feet, and renews the fight.

In consequence of his missionary pledge John came into connection with a select society at Andover called "The Brethren," which was composed of students who had pledged themselves to go on foreign missions. One of the exercises of this society was, that each member in turn should listen silently while the other members told him plainly his faults with a view to helping him improve. John submitted to this ordinance, and found it so helpful that he later introduced it in the Oneida Community. There under the name of "mutual criticism" the practice was greatly expanded and became one of the principal means of government.

As to the regular studies in the Andover Seminary,

the chief was biblical exegesis under Professor Moses Stuart, who was then regarded as the foremost exegetical teacher in America. As we shall see later, Professor Stuart's interpretation of two disputed passages of Scripture had a marked influence in determining John's theological opinions.

But the principal benefit which John derived while at Andover was from studying the Bible without note or commentary, according to a method of his own. His method was to select some trait in the character of Christ, or some spiritual truth, and with this in mind read the four gospels through at a sitting noting down every passage which bore on the subject. He would then read over his notes, reflect upon them, and endeavor to obtain a clear and comprehensive view of the trait or truth selected for study. In this manner he went through the four gospels almost daily for months. Then he applied the same method to the epistles. By this means he acquired an astonishing familiarity with the New Testament. If almost any passage were read, he could give the chapter and verse; or if chapter and verse were given, he could recite the passage.

As the school year drew toward its close, John was much troubled over the question whether to finish his theological course at Andover, or go to New Haven. The first year at Andover was regarded as superior, while the doctrinal studies later were not considered equal to those given at New Haven under Dr. Taylor. Moreover the want of spirituality at Andover was in John's mind a powerful reason for making the change. On the other side of the account were the matters of

expense, the sacrificing of established connections, and the conservative solidity of the course at the older seminary. John balanced the pros and cons of this question for days without being able to arrive at any conclusion. At last in his perplexity, while praying for guidance, it occurred to him to try opening the Bible. Without much expectation of help he opened the book at random, and the first passage that met his eyes was Matthew 28:5-6: "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here." The coincidence between this passage and the facts as he had observed them broke the deadlock of his motives and he determined to go to New Haven.

CHAPTER VII

THEOLOGICAL COURSE AT NEW HAVEN

At the end of August 1832 John entered the middle class of the Yale Theological Seminary at New Haven, Connecticut. Here the general tone of his experience underwent another marked change, for whereas at Andover he was mainly occupied with subjective exercises, at New Haven we find him plunging with great ardor into objective Christian work.

One enterprise, to which in his new ambition he devoted himself, was the cause of antislavery. He immediately became much engaged in religious work among the negroes of New Haven; and in the winter of 1832-3 he joined with "Hardware Dwight" and a number of other radicals in founding the New Haven Antislavery Society, one of the first antislavery societies to be formed in America.

Another enterprise which called out his enthusiasm was the organization of the New Haven Free Church. One result of the revival fervor throughout the country was the formation of so-called "free churches," in which the more zealous members of all the regular denominations gathered. The free churches were frankly devoted to revivals, and made use of measures which were startling and repugnant to "dead orthodoxy." There was the nucleus of a free church

at New Haven, and John with his revival zeal soon came into connection with it. When he first joined, there were less than a dozen members, only one of whom had any property or weight of character, and no regular pastor was employed. As time went on the membership increased, and the leaders began to look around for a successful revivalist whom they could put in charge of the work. During the winter vacation of 1832-3 John had become acquainted with James Boyle, a powerful preacher who was then conducting a revival in Brattleboro; and when the question of engaging a pastor for the Free Church came up, John urgently recommended Mr. Boyle. Accordingly the position was offered to him, and was accepted. Boyle came to New Haven and assumed his duties as pastor in March 1833.

In the summer of 1833 John experienced a great increase of faith in prayer. In consequence of this he came perilously near trouble with the college authorities. One of his fellow-students, who was not very friendly to him or his views, asked him one day, what he thought of the prayers which President Day offered in chapel every night and morning. John replied, that in his opinion they were "very good moral discourses—edifying religious talk—but no prayers at all." The remark was reported to the faculty, and John received an admonitory call from Tutor Day, a nephew of the President. He admitted that the remark was indiscreet, and the matter was dropped.

In August 1833 John's class received their licenses to preach. In the course of the examinations John was drawn into two warm controversies with his pro-

fessors; one with Dr. Bacon on faith in prayer, and the other with Dr. Taylor on the double sense of Scripture. Notwithstanding his heretical tendencies he received his license with the rest of the class.

It was customary among theological students to spend considerable time during the last year of their course "candidating," as it was called: acquiring experience of actual church work by performing the duties of pastor in congregations where a regular pastor was lacking. Accordingly for nine weeks after his final examinations John officiated as pastor of a church at North Salem, New York, a small village about eighteen miles east of Peekskill. The following extracts from his diary give a glimpse of this episode in his career:

Aug. 18.—In the evening I preached a written sermon, and resolved never to do so again unless by absolute necessity. A dozen times in the course of my sermon I was ready to lay aside my notes, and throw my soul into my mouth; but I plodded through, and closed with an extemporaneous appeal which was worth more to me than all the rest.

Aug. 25, Sabbath.—In the forenoon went to the meeting-house at the usual hour for meeting, and found nobody there. I waited more than half an hour, and at last a little handful collected. I was wickedly discouraged. Preached on the law. It was hard work. The service dragged, and I was ready to give up in despair.

In the afternoon a larger assembly collected, and I went about my work with more heart and humility.

Preached on justification by faith, and found my mouth full. I blundered some, but on the whole was greatly encouraged to hope that I shall yet be enabled to speak boldly and prevailingly for God.

In the evening preached on the difference between the righteous and the wicked, and again was abundantly encouraged. The audience was respectable, and my heart was enlarged. I am sure I gave the church a faithful exhortation, and it was to me a solemn and delightful meeting. I returned to my room and to my bed much fatigued, but far less so than I expected, and withal happy.

For the first time today I have performed the Sabbath duties of a minister. It is wonderful to think how God has strengthened me. A year ago my nerves were so sensitive, and my voice so weak, that an evening meeting would spoil me for the succeeding day, and I had no expectation of ever being strong enough to preach extemporaneously three times in a day. Now it actually does me good to preach. My nerves are quiet, my voice grows strong by exercise, and I felt better today when I had finished than when I began. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Aug. 27.—After breakfast this morning Mr. Lockwood came to my room, and gave me another lecture about Taylorism. He says, there were some things in my sermon Sunday afternoon, which he feels himself bound as an elder of the church to reprobate. I was a long time puzzled to think, what there could be in my discourse that he could deem heretical. At last by his help I found out, that he disliked my comparing the sinner's condition to that of a drunkard. In il-

lustrating the idea that faith in Christ implies the giving up of all sin, I had taken the case of a drunkard who concludes to give up his cups; but knowing that his bare resolution will never secure him, he makes another man his guardian, puts his property into his hands, and commits himself wholly to his disposal; and his guardian covenants to deliver him from his ruinous habit. Thus he virtually in the first act of abandonment gives up the whole habit, because the covenant he then makes covers the whole ground. So the sinner in putting himself wholly in the hands of God virtually gives up all sin, because the covenant he makes with God covers the whole ground, and will certainly secure him from the power of sin. Mr. Lockwood thought this a poor foundation for the perseverance of the saints. We had a very warm discussion, or dispute it might be called, although I told him before we began, I thought a dispute in any case worse than nothing. I suspect he is almost sorry he sent for me to come here and preach. He is much afraid of the Presbytery, and I think myself from what I can learn, that there is reason to expect difficulty. I am in the midst of a domineering set of ministers. I had no idea before, that this land of liberty was cursed with such spiritual domination. Well, I must keep cool and quiet, and move straight forward as long as Satan will let me, and then I must flee to some other city. But God forbid, that I should forbear to declare his whole counsel for the fear of man. The servant of the Lord must not strive, and yet he must preach the gospel of God boldly and "with much contention."

Sept. 3.—Spent the morning in studying "the mind of Christ," and was permitted to see more of his glory than I have ever seen before. I walked out over the hills, and in the solitude of the forest under the canopy of heaven poured out my soul unto God, and wept for joy. My peace was as a river. I could only exclaim: "Oh, what a glorious Christ is mine!"

Sept. 29, Sabbath.—Was wonderfully pressed in the spirit this morning. The word of the Lord was as a fire shut up in my bones, and I longed to speak to sinners. I knew somebody was praying for me. I preached in the forenoon with great enlargement on the case of the amiable young man. After meeting Mrs. T—— walked home with me, and I tried with all my might to bring her to submission. We prayed together. She seemed willing to give up all, and I hope did so; but the Lord only knows. In the afternoon I preached from the text: "How can we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" After service I talked again with Mrs. T——, and with a Miss H——, who seemed to be serious. They both promised they would seek salvation. Also I had a conversation with one of Mrs. B——'s daughters. In the evening I preached from the text: "How long halt ye?" and was greatly assisted. The audience was larger than usual, and very solemn. After the discourse I called upon those who were determined to a decision to arise. One young man arose, but I had no opportunity of conversation with him. This has been a glorious day. God has seemed to give me a token of his coming. I can hardly realize that he has already awakened some by my instrumentality. The

way of the Lord is prepared in some measure in the hearts of his people. Christians are praying, and sinners will soon lie weeping.

Oct. 14.—Spent the forenoon in making farewell visits; melancholy but pleasant business. I found myself more interested in the people than I expected, or was aware of; and on a review of my sojourn I have great reason to bless God for sending me here. I hope my labors have not been in vain to others. I know they have not been to myself. I have learned more about the Bible and about human nature during the past nine weeks than during all my theological course.

While John was at North Salem, his sister Joanna came on from Putney bringing the tidings that Mary, Horatio and George had all become Christians. Joanna was on her way to Glens Falls, New York, to visit Elizabeth, who resided there with her husband, Dr. Ransom; and she persuaded John to accompany her, wedging the trip in between two Sabbaths, so as to interfere as little as possible with his pastoral work.

On the way from Albany to Schenectady they saw with great astonishment one of the newly-invented steam locomotives driving past them "at the furious rate of fifteen to twenty miles per hour."

In this visit to Glens Falls we catch a glimpse of John through his sister Joanna's eyes. His earnest efforts to convert the members of the family and his single-eyed, unsparing devotion to the cause of Christ drew from her a few days later a letter expostulating with him for "too great strenuousness"; and in a letter

home she says: "John thinks we are very worldly. He is certainly a remarkable person. I never knew anyone so self-denying, so divested of any worldly feeling."

On his return to New Haven in October John plunged again into the activities of the Free Church and of the Theological Seminary. He says in his *Confession of Religious Experience*:

During the autumn of 1833 my spirit rapidly increased in strength. By constant fellowship and conversation with Boyle, Dutton (a disciple of the famous revivalist Horatio Foot) and other zealous young men of the "new measure" school who had recently joined the Seminary, by reading such books as *The Life of J. B. Taylor* and Wesley's *Christian Perfection,* as well as by much study of the Bible and fervent prayer, my heart was kept in steady and accelerating progression toward holiness.

Soon after my return from North Salem I had occasion with the rest of my class to make a skeleton of a sermon for examination by Dr. Fitch on a text given out by him, viz., Phil. 3:13, 14: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The passage harmonized well with the state of my mind, and in studying it I received a new baptism of zeal. The train of thought sketched in the skeleton which I handed in was summed up at the end in these words: Paul sought a perfect object, by perfect means, with perfect energy. The Doctor smiled at the repetition of the word perfect, but made no objection.

Boyle in the course of his preaching frequently threw out the idea that persecution is the test of faithfulness. This was a favorite maxim of the "new measure" school. I embraced it cordially, and promulgated it as far as possible among the students of the Seminary. It met with much opposition. I read a long article on the subject before the Society of the Seminary, in which I adduced the whole testimony of the Bible to the truth that "they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The excitement on the subject ran so high, that a debate was appointed, and Dr. Taylor was called in to give his opinion. After much discussion he decided the question in the negative, alleging the experience of the best ministers in Connecticut as illustrations of his position, that in this country persecution does not always follow faithfulness. In the course of this controversy I settled in my heart a principle which abides with me to this day, viz., that I will never expect or desire to be treated in this world better than Jesus Christ and his gospel are treated.

During the whole fall and winter the Seminary was constantly agitated by discussions private and public on subjects similar to those above noticed. Dr. Taylor was usually called in as arbitrator, and usually took sides with the conservatives. I acknowledge, however, to his credit, that he laid no obstacles in the way of free discussion, and that he exhorted us to "follow the truth, though it should cut our heads off." Dutton stood by me faithfully through the whole warfare. Indeed he was the only man with whom I had full sympathy at that time.

Meanwhile Boyle was laboring with all his might to bring the members of the Free Church under conviction. A revival that promised to shake the whole city had commenced. The first convert was a young man by the name of Merwin. At one of the meetings he was convicted. Dutton, in the bold way which he had learned in his service with the revivalist, Horatio Foot, immediately commenced an open conversation with him, and insisted before the whole assembly that he should immediately submit to God. Much excitement prevailed in the congregation. The young man hesitated long. But Dutton persevered, and by dint of cool reasoning on the one hand and warm praying on the other he at last conquered. Merwin broke down and professed submission on the spot. Thenceforward the revival steadily advanced. The Saturday evening meetings were crowded, and every meeting was crowned with conversions. Boyle gave charge of those meetings to Dutton and myself. Our method of proceeding was this: I preached the regular discourse; Dutton followed with an exhortation; and at the close of the meeting those who were desirous of conversation were invited to remain. A dozen or more would usually stay, and it was rare that any of them went away at last without professing conversion. I held several other weekly meetings in different parts of the city at the same time and with similar results. My heart was much engaged in these labors. . . .

By systematic temperance, fasting, exercise and prayer I had overcome the bodily infirmities which troubled me at Andover. I was no longer tormented

with inordinate alimentiveness and other temptations to sensuality. I had conquered my nervous system, which for a long time after my conversion had been morbidly excitable. I could now study intensely twelve or even sixteen hours in a day without injury. Preaching, which once would shake and disorder my nerves, had become a delight and refreshment to me. I was constantly cheerful and often very happy. My chief delight, next to that of communing with Christ through the Scriptures, was in prayer. I was in the habit of spending not less than three hours in my closet daily. In those seasons I could truly say that I entered "into the secret place of the Most High, and abode under the shadow of the Almighty." The spirit of love blotted out my transgressions, wiped away my tears, and filled me with unutterable bliss. Many times and for days together my heart was so burdened with spiritual joy, that my body became weak and pined away. I record these facts not in the spirit of boasting, but rather that I may show how much religion I had to give up, when subsequently "judgment was laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet."

CHAPTER VIII

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

It is related that soon after his conversion, while discussing a question of theology with his father, Noyes advanced a view that was at variance with the accepted doctrine. "Take care," said his father. "That is heresy. If you get out of the traces, the ministers will whip you in." "Never!" said Noyes. "Never will I be compelled by ministers or any one else to accept any doctrine that does not commend itself to my mind and conscience."

It is indeed unthinkable, that Noyes with his fiery zeal and independence of mind should for long continue within the rock-bound limits of the traditional creeds. We saw in the last chapter how nearly he came to a serious collision with a "set of domineering ministers" at North Salem. We have now to trace the course by which, starting in full sympathy with the church, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, he gradually passed beyond the boundaries of orthodox belief, and finally found himself completely without the pale.

In his *Confession of Religious Experience* Noyes says:

"I first advanced into actual heresy in the early part of the summer of 1833, while still a student in the New Haven Seminary. In the course of my Bible

studies my attention was arrested by Christ's expression in John 21:22: 'If I will that he [John] tarry till I come, what is that to thee?' This seemed to imply that Jesus expected his disciple John to live until his second coming, and the disciples so construed it. The church on the contrary taught that Christ's second coming was still far in the future. I had long been growing in the belief that the Bible was not a book of inexplicable riddles, and I determined to solve this mystery. Accordingly I read the New Testament through ten times with my eye on the question as to the time of Christ's second coming, and my heart struggling in prayer for full access to the truth. I soon perceived that every allusion to the second coming in which there was a clue as to its time pointed in the same direction; and when my investigation was ended, my mind was clear: I no longer conjectured, I *knew* that the time appointed for the second coming of Christ was within one generation from the time of his personal ministry."

Noyes's theory of the second coming was the key to his theology and consequently a most powerful factor in shaping his career. Since his exposition of the subject is contained not in a single book but in a large number of articles and talks scattered through forty years of his life, it is impossible to bring together direct quotations which will give a concise, connected account of the subject in its various aspects. The editor has therefore attempted in the following statement partly in his own words and partly in Noyes's to present the theory as nearly as possible in the form it finally took in Noyes's mind:

To prevent misunderstanding it should here be shown exactly what is meant by the second coming of Christ. A miniature of the transactions comprised in the first and second comings may be seen in the parable of the nobleman's return: "A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him; [and he reckoned with them, rewarding them according to their several merits, and then said:] But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." Luke 19:12-27.

We learn from this parable that Christ came, departed, and returned. We learn also that at his first coming he was comparatively powerless; that in the interval between his departure and his return he had received from his Father great power and authority; and that his second coming was attended by the judgment, reward, and punishment of those who had witnessed his humble ministry and cruel death while on earth.

A more particular account of the second coming is contained in the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew. In answer to his disciples' question, What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world, Jesus described the unparalleled tribulations soon to

be visited on the Jewish race culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem. Then he said: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Because of the form of the disciples' question in the English translation some have assumed, that the second coming was to be identified with the end of the physical world. But the Greek words translated "end of the world" mean only end of the age; and that Christ used them in this sense is evident from his reference in this same discourse to events that were to take place on earth long after his second coming.

Again, because of the fact that the second coming was manifestly associated in these passages with a day of judgment, many have supposed that the second coming would not take place until the final and general judgment of mankind. But an attentive study of the Bible leads to the conclusion, that the judgment of mankind instead of being a single transaction, as popularly supposed, is divided into two acts occupying two distinct periods of time. When Christ says that Jerusalem after its destruction "shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be

fulfilled," he implies that the judgment of the Gentiles will be distinct from and long after the judgment of the Jews. The same fact is brought out clearly by John in the vision of the seals and trumpets. In this vision, when the sixth seal is opened, Christ appears on the throne of judgment amid signs in heaven and earth, and men hide themselves from his face, saying, The great day of his wrath is come. This is evidently the first judgment. Afterward the seventh seal is opened, introducing a long series of events attending the successive sounding of seven trumpets. At length, when the seventh trumpet sounds, Christ is proclaimed sovereign of the earth, and the stage is set for a second and final judgment.

The propriety of two judgments becomes apparent, when we consider the general plan of redemption as laid down in the Bible. As God divides mankind into two great families—the Jews and the Gentiles—so he has appointed a separate judgment for each. The harvest of the Jews came first, because they were ripened first. God separated them from the rest of the nations, and for two thousand years poured upon them the sunshine and rain of religious discipline. When Christ came, he said that the fields were "white to the harvest." By the preaching of Christ and his apostles the preparation for judgment was completed, and at the destruction of Jerusalem the Jews as a nation were judged. Then the process of special religious discipline passed from the Jews to the Gentiles. For nearly two thousand years the Gentile crop has been maturing, and we may reasonably look for the Gentile harvest as near.

Thus it will be seen, that by the second coming of Christ is meant his coming with authority and power to reckon with, reward and punish those to whom he delivered the gospel at his first coming; the day of judgment for the apostolic church and the Jewish nation, not the final and general judgment; the end of the age or cycle which commenced with Moses, not the end of the physical world.

Christ in his various discourses explicitly limited the time of his second coming by five different but equivalent statements:

1. He placed it "immediately after" the unparalleled tribulations of the Jewish people leading up to and culminating in the destruction of their holy city and the extinction of their national existence.

2. He said that his disciples would not have gone over the cities of Israel in their mission of preaching the gospel before the Son of man would come.

3. He expressly stated that his return would take place within the lifetime of the generation then living on the earth.

4. He declared that some of those to whom he spoke would live to see the event.

5. He plainly intimated in the passage quoted above that John would be one of those who would survive until he came.

The apostles in their writings give abundant evidence that they understood these sayings of Christ in their literal and obvious sense. They exhort the churches to look and wait for the coming of Christ in language which would sound strange in the mouths of ministers today. They constantly speak of the

event as near at hand. Paul plainly assumes, that he and some of those to whom he writes will be alive on earth when Christ returns. Both church and secular historians are fully aware of this belief on the part of the apostles, and have noted the fact that the amazing growth of the church during the forty years following the crucifixion was partly due to the universal expectation among the primitive believers that the return of Christ for judgment, vengeance and reward was soon to take place.

In addition to the five explicit time-limitations quoted above Christ predicted three events within the church, which were to serve as signs of the near approach of his coming, namely, the preaching of the gospel throughout the world, the appearance of false Christs, and a great falling away among his followers. The fulfillment of these predictions is recorded in the New Testament itself, as will be seen by placing predictions and fulfillments in parallel columns thus:

Predictions.	*Fulfillments.*
Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. Matt. 24: 11.	Many false prophets are gone out into the world. I John 4: 1.
There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets. Matt. 24: 24.	Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. I John 2: 18.

Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Matt. 24: 12.

That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed. II Thess. 2: 3.

Thou hast left thy first love. Rev. 2: 4.

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. Rev. 3: 15.

This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. Matt. 24: 14.

They went forth, and p r e a c h e d everywhere. Mark 16: 20.

But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. Rom. 10: 18.

The gospel . . . which was preached to every creature which is under heaven. Col. 1:23.

Christ also predicted that the interval immediately preceding his return would be characterized in the world at large by an unexampled succession of wars, pestilences, earthquakes, eclipses and famines. Of these predictions no one denies the substantial fulfillment. Renan has shown that the period from 60 to 80 A. D. was characterized to an extent unprecedented in Mediterranean history by earthquakes, eclipses, vol-

canic eruptions, and crop failures resulting in famine.* And the most notable sign of all, the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in the year 70 A. D., is as well authenticated as any fact in history. This event with its attendant circumstances was to the Jews a calamity horrible, stupendous, inconceivable. In all of its physical aspects, at any rate, it was a veritable national judgment. Jews by the hundred thousand, the flower of the race, who had come to Jerusalem from all over the world to attend the Passover feast, were caught in the Roman net and destroyed. Eleven hundred thousand, including all the aged and infirm, perished by sword and famine during the siege. Ninety-seven thousand able-bodied men were carried to Rome or sent as presents to the provinces, to be killed by gladiators and wild beasts in the games of the circus. All the children under seventeen were despatched as slaves to the Egyptian mines. The city and temple were utterly demolished. The daily sacrifice, which symbolized the Jewish religion and which, they believed, had been almost uninterruptedly maintained since the time of Moses, was forcibly and hopelessly broken up. The national and territorial rights of the Jews, which even their Babylonian and Persian conquerors had to some extent recognized, were completely and finally taken away.

But despite the fulfillment of the predicted signs it might still be objected, that history bears no direct

* These inorganic phenomena are not necessarily to be regarded as miracles. They may be, as F. W. Frankland has said, an inexorable *prius,* to which the providential government of the universe can only be adjusted—not vice versa.—G. W. N.

testimony to the occurrence of the second coming itself. This leads to the inquiry, what according to Christ's description was to be the nature of the event. The answer is, it was to be secret "like a thief in the night"; omnipresent like the lightning; not with outward show, since the kingdom of heaven was within. In a word the second coming was to be, like the first coming, of a nature to confound and disappoint the expectations of worldly wisdom. There was to be an outward and visible index of portentous events, but the principal manifestation was to be in the invisible world, whither a large majority of the subjects of the Jewish dispensation had already departed.

Although history bears no direct testimony to the occurrence of Christ's second coming at the end of the Jewish dispensation, there are nevertheless a number of circumstances which might be regarded as indirect confirmations of the foregoing theory. Among these the following are deserving of mention:

1. The destruction of Jerusalem marks the beginning of a strange hiatus in the records of the Christian church*—a "historical chasm of sixty or eighty years" Heudekoper calls it. Where before we walk in the glare of authentic letters and narratives in abundance, immediately after we grope and stumble in a historic night. Luke for some unaccountable reason closes his narrative of *The Acts,* leaving us in doubt as to the fate of Paul. Paul himself, inde-

* See also the preface to the 1887 edition of *The Parousia* (London) by J. Stuart Russell, who advocates with great fullness of detail the preterist view of the second coming.—G. W. N.

fatigable publicist as he always was, writes no more letters, and sends no more messengers to the churches under his care. Mark throws aside his pen in the middle of an unfinished sentence, abandoning his gospel to be finished by an unknown hand. We have no certain information regarding the death of any of the apostles save the few who perished years before the critical period. Just as the darkness closes in, what Renan calls "the lightning-flash of the Apocalypse" for a moment illumines the scene. It is a warning message to the church that the coming of Christ is at the door. Then the curtain falls, and for seventy years almost the only authentic evidence of the existence of the church is the letter of Pliny to the emperor Trajan, which, as F. W. Frankland says, bears "oblique but eloquent witness in its account of the strength of Bithynian Christianity to the impression produced by great events in the recent Past."

2. When at length the church again emerges into view, its character is totally changed. In place of the substantial unity of the apostolic church we find a main body represented by the so-called apostolic fathers, opposed on the one side by the Ebionites and on the other by the Gnostics. The early simplicity is already giving way to the ritual and organization of the Church of Rome. On examining the writings of these various sects we find what Reuss calls "an immense retrogression" from the views of the apostles. Puerility is the outstanding characteristic of all.

To the apostolic fathers salvation has become a mere matter of wages and mechanical arrangement. Prayer, fasting, alms-giving are efficacious to cancel an equiv-

alent amount of sins. No difference is felt as to moral value between the law and the gospel. Heresy-hunting has become the chief intellectual concern. Extravagant claims of miraculous power are equaled only by the credulity with which they are received. The seeds of monasticism and saint-worship are plainly to be seen.

The Ebionites were a Judaizing sect. Because Paul broke loose from Judaism and adapted Christianity to world-wide needs, they rejected him as an impostor. They adhered to the entire Mosaic law, including circumcision, and observed both the Christian and the Jewish Sabbath. They circulated fantastic tales about a revelation given in the year 100 A. D. to a certain Elchasai by Jesus Christ in the person of an angel ninety-six miles high, accompanied by the Holy Ghost in the person of a female angel of the same stature.

The Gnostics were a sect of mystery-mongers. They relied for salvation on the observance of mystic rites, and the knowledge of mystic names, numbers, and formulas. They believed that the soul in its flight to heaven was opposed by a legion of demons, and in order to make a safe passage must know the name of each diabolical assailant and be provided with the requisite sacred formula to render him harmless.

No one of these sub-apostolic writers had any sure information regarding the last days of the apostles. Expectation of an imminent second coming of Christ, which was so rife in the Primitive Church, had wholly passed away.

3. The closing events of the apostolic age and the world movements of history which followed were singularly suggestive of the authority and power which

prophecy had assigned to Christ at his second coming. The Jewish people, who had rejected and crucified him, driven from their native land and scattered among all nations in accordance with his prediction, remain to this day a monument of miscarried national hopes. Jerusalem, the scene of his humiliation and death, after being destroyed by the Romans was rebuilt only to be ground under the heel of Gentile oppressors for two thousand years. The Roman Empire, whose provincial governor delivered him to his accusers and whose soldiers executed their brutal sentence, was at length dashed in pieces. It was the last of the world-empires described by Daniel in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and was succeeded in accordance with Daniel's prophecy by a group of balanced and divided political powers. The Gentiles, previously from the Jewish point of view without the pale, were admitted to an equal share in the salvation brought by Christ, and in the new cycle, which commenced with the destruction of Jerusalem, became the chief subjects of religious discipline. The Christian religion swept with incredible swiftness to its complete triumph over Judaism and Paganism in the Greco-Roman world. The tiny record of Christ's life and teachings, written not by Christ but by his disciples, preserved through centuries of pagan hostility and barbarian vandalism, was at last printed, translated into every tongue, and circulated more widely than any other book. The Christian nations with resistless tread advanced to sovereignty over all the earth. If Christ had then begun literally to "rule the nations with a rod of iron," events could hardly have turned more in accordance with the prophe-

cies of the Bible and the interests of his own kingdom.

In the foregoing review we have followed the stream of historically recognized events as it approached and passed through the predicted "end of the age" and finally merged with the events of the succeeding age. So far as these visible events are concerned the prescience of Christ in his eschatological utterances is minutely established. In regard to the invisible events, which were equally the subjects of his predictions, we can only say that the fulfillment of his predictions in the things that were seen creates a presumption, that his predictions were fulfilled in the things that were not seen; and those who have learned on other grounds to take Christ fully at his word may reasonably believe in a second stream of events parallel to the first, but beyond the verge of visibility. They will see in imagination a Judgment Assize set up in the invisible world immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem; punishments and rewards meted out to all the subjects of the Jewish dispensation; immortality of a vivid and dominant type attained by the faithful followers of Christ; and the emergence of the spiritual organization of which Christ was head as thenceforth the paramount factor in human affairs.

Noyes was one of those who took Christ fully at his word, and the second coming of Christ in its visible and invisible aspects was to him a potent reality. He measured the greatness of the event thus: *"As the body is to the soul, so was the awful overthrow of Jerusalem to the second coming of Christ.* The slaughter of eleven hundred thousand Jews was the visible and inferior

index of that spiritual judgment, in which 'the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man hid themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come.' "

The most important consequences of this theory may be stated thus:

1. It reëstablishes the credit of Christianity by reëstablishing the credit of Christ and his apostles on a crucial point of their teaching. The idea that Christ and his apostles were mistaken in regard to the time of the second coming has been felt in all ages as a serious difficulty for the Christian religion; and now that the "mistake" has been magnified to nearly two thousand years the difficulty has become well-nigh insuperable. How vulnerable Christianity is on this point, and how alive to their advantage hostile critics are, may be judged from the following extract from an article by Alexander Brown in the London *Contemporary Review* for March 1911:

"At present the storm-center is the seemingly insignificant matter of the apocalyptic teaching of the Master. The accusation is made in the bluntest terms, that He uttered predictions concerning Himself, which time has shown to be false, proving that He misconceived His own importance and misread the future of His cause. This is meant to carry the implication, that one so visibly deceived cannot be trusted in anything else that He taught. This accusation of failure and

falsity has been persistently made, and buttressed with much learning during the last ten years."

The common view of the second coming, it must be confessed, leaves Christianity helpless against such attacks. The above theory, if true, is a complete defense.

2. This view removes the foundations of a great variety of false and harmful speculations in regard to the second coming, such as the following:

(a) The belief of William Miller, of the Adventists, and of numberless others throughout the Christian centuries, that the second coming was, or is about to take place.

(b) The belief of many, like Swedenborg and Ann Lee, that the second coming has recently taken place in their own persons.

(c) The belief of the Universalists that, since the judgment most frequently alluded to in the Bible was to take place within the lifetime of the apostles and evidently referred to the judgment of the Jews in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem, no further judgment of mankind need now be expected.

3. This view reduces the authority of the early Christian fathers to an amount commensurate with their actual merits. According to the accepted view the early Christian fathers, since they lived so much nearer than we to the time of Christ, must have been correspondingly more Christ-like than we; hence in the orthodox churches Clement, Ignatius, Papias, Barnabas were regarded as nearly if not quite equal in authority to Peter, James, John, Paul. And yet nothing is more manifest to a student of history than the fact, that the Christian church in passing from the first to the second cen-

tury underwent a sudden and vast declension of quality. With this undoubted fact the foregoing theory of the second coming exactly agrees. According to that theory the apostolic church, which attained the highest standard of character the world has ever seen, passed at the second coming into the invisible world; and the church immediately succeeding, being composed chiefly of newly-converted pagans and barbarians and lacking the genuinely spiritual nucleus which at the second coming was withdrawn from the visible world, instead of being more advanced than the church of the present day must of necessity have been far less advanced. To one who accepts that theory, therefore, the early Christian fathers with their crude ideas of morality and religion are examples not of an exalted spiritual state which we ought to strive for, but rather of a childish state which we have outgrown.

4. This view of the second coming invalidates all claims to ecclesiastical authority that are based on the assumption of historic continuity with the apostles. The thread of historic continuity, instead of connecting with the apostles, connects either with the unfaithful few* who at the second coming were rejected, or with the mass of immature believers who could not in any sense be looked upon as vested with apostolic authority. The only credential that can substantiate a claim of

* Noyes did not deny that there have been many true representatives of Christ in the world since the second coming. But he believed that, like the "two witnesses" described in Revelation, they have been "clothed in sackcloth," not in priestly robes. He looked for the "remnant of the seed" of the apostolic church not among those who claimed authority inherited from the apostles, but among the heretics whom they persecuted.—G. W. N.

apostolic authority is present communication with Christ.

5. This view of the second coming gives a reasonable answer to the many attacks on Christianity which are based on the failure of the visible Christian church fully to embody Christian principles. First, the apostolic church, which alone exhibits the mature fruit of Christianity, fully embodied the principles of Christ during its career on earth, and has fully embodied those principles since its transfer to the spiritual world. Secondly, Christianity as we see it today is not an uninterrupted development of the Christianity that existed at the end of the apostolic age. On account of the withdrawal of the spiritual part of the apostolic church at the second coming and the assimilation of uncounted multitudes of pagans and barbarians during the two centuries immediately following, the Christianity of the third century A. D. represented a stage of civilization in many respects as low as that of the Jews in the time of Moses. It is to this low beginning that the development since must be added in reckoning the present position of the visible Christian church. And if the proportion of altruistic individuals among the Christian nations today is approximately as great as it was in the Jewish world in 70 A. D., which probably few will deny, Christianity must be pronounced an unequivocal success.

6. This view of the second coming brings into harmony the biblical and the evolutionary conceptions of religious history. The orthodox churches believed that religious privileges and experience had remained on the same general level since the time of Moses. Christians

confessed sin the same as non-Christians; and Christians of the nineteenth century the same as Christians of the third century, or Jews of the twelfth century B. C. All, however, were devoutly hoping for a religious consummation to be suddenly manifested at some distant future date. This is the static conception of religious history. The foregoing theory, on the other hand, marks off religious history into cycles of definite aim and accomplishment. The second coming marked the end of a cycle which commenced with Moses. Its aim was the religious discipline of the Jews, and its consummation was the apostolic church, which, as will be shown in the next chapter, for the first time in human history attained the experience of complete freedom from sin. Then a new cycle commenced, the aim of which was the religious discipline of the Gentiles. For nineteen hundred years the Gentiles have been toiling upward toward a consummation which Noyes believed to be close at hand. This is the dynamic or evolutionary conception of religious history. According to this view the religious experience of mankind, instead of being a static condition with a sudden cataclysmic *dénouement,* is a progressive evolution in harmony with the principle which governs all other known processes of life.

7. Finally, this view of the second coming rivets the attention of Christians to the apostolic church as the perfect pattern both in teaching and experience. As that church was the consummation of the Jewish era, the discerning Christian will see in it the consummation toward which the present era is progressing. And the Christian churches that have occupied the visible field

since the second coming he will see in their true perspective, starting from a low beginning and advancing through the centuries to a point not yet as high as that of the apostolic church in 70 A. D. For instruction and example therefore he will look over the heads of Revivalist, Calvinist, Reformer, Pope, Apologist, and Christian Father, and fix his eye on Christ and the apostles; and so far as his faith is able to apprehend the apostolic church as a still existent spiritual organization, as the united, triumphant church which Christ prayed for and predicted and which has always been the ideal of Christendom, so far will be able to draw on the stores of sympathetic help which flow from a sense of personal companionship and leadership in the battle of life.

Whatever may have been the objective truth or falsity of this theory of the second coming, its subjective effect was tremendous. It is difficult for us of the twentieth century to put ourselves back into the state of mind and feeling of the New England church of 1833. To Noyes, just completing his theological course at New Haven and thus far in full sympathy with the church, how revolutionary these conclusions seemed! What boundless possibilities of doctrinal reform opened before him! With what a consciousness of power did he attack the problems of the Bible! No wonder that he instinctively felt, and wrote to his friends, that he had entered upon a course of discovery which would probably end in his expulsion from the church.

CHAPTER IX

THEORY OF SALVATION FROM SIN

Noyes with his intensely practical turn of mind soon perceived in his new theory of the second coming an important bearing on the problem which ever since his conversion had engaged his thoughts and energies, the problem of overcoming sin. He saw that, if it was really true that the second coming of Christ took place at the close of the apostolic age, the religious experience of the world had reached a later stage of development than he had supposed. Instead of living, as he had been taught, in the age of prophecy and promise, he was living in the age of fulfillment. The Jewish era, commenced by Moses, extended by the prophets, amplified by Christ at his first coming, was brought by his second coming to completion. Therefore in the later days of that era, in the period between the first and second comings of Christ, must be found the mature fruit of a complete cycle of religious discipline; and it became a matter of great concern to ascertain exactly what that fruit was. Searching the Bible for an answer to this question Noyes became convinced, that the mature fruit of the Jewish era was nothing less than entire salvation from sin, perfect holiness in this life.

In the natural development of ethical ideas holiness and sin are at first conceived as outward acts that either

do or do not conform to the will of God. The earliest religious leaders were men who believed themselves to be in communication with God, and authorized by him to proclaim his will. Moses was one of these. His message to the Jewish people was the necessity of *right action.* He embodied what he believed to be the will of God under all conceivable circumstances in his marvelous code of laws, and he promulgated this as a perfect rule of action. For many centuries the Jews were dull to Moses' commands; but at last by prolonged discipline and the incessant labors of the prophets the Mosaic idea was completely enthroned in their hearts. To them holiness was obedience to the law; sin was disobedience to the law. In other words holiness was right action; sin was wrong action.

But right action is consistent with wrong intent, and wrong action with right intent; and since action is ultimately based on intent, the latter rather than the former is the true measure of character. Hence Christ introduced a radical change in the conception of holiness and sin. While affirming with Moses the necessity of right action, he insisted on the prior necessity of *right intent.* He said to his followers: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." And to show wherein the difference consisted he said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Christ knew that right intent working intelligently was certain to result in right action; hence to him



J. H. NOYES, ABOUT 1840

the kernel of holiness was perfect love of God and man.

This new conception, while it added to the scope of holiness, simplified greatly the problem of its attainment. The thousand precepts of the law were reduced to one, that is love; and love, which is the essence of holiness, was made easier by the wonderful example of it in the life and death of Christ himself.

The first person in modern times who began to apprehend this new conception of holiness in its relation to salvation from sin was John Wesley. He had taught about a hundred years before, that holiness consisted essentially in perfect love of God and man, and could be attained in this life. But lacking the viewpoint of Noyes's theory of the second coming he could not see the doctrine of Christian perfection in its true perspective. He did not grasp the fact that perfect holiness was attained by the apostolic church in the harvest period just previous to Christ's second coming, and that it must again appear as the mature fruit of the Gentile era. He looked upon perfect holiness as a theoretical possibility, and encouraged the more spiritual of his followers to seek it. But he did not regard it as necessary to a sense of justification, nor as secure from backsliding if attained. Nor did he clearly and practically distinguish between the new conception of holiness as love, and the old conception as doing the works of the law.

Within recent years in America the doctrine of Christian perfection had been taught by a number of revival leaders, notably James Latourette, John B. Foot, and Hiram Sheldon. During the period of religious en-

thusiasm in the early thirties these men had gained a considerable following, especially in the state of New York. The New York Perfectionists, as they were called, were all Wesleyan in origin and characteristics, the chief difference being that they laid more emphasis on the doctrine than Wesley did, and were willing to be called Perfectionists.

Even the leaders of the New England church were beginning to lean in this same direction. For example, they could no longer subscribe to the old Calvinistic doctrine, that man was created wholly depraved and incapable of righteousness except as moved by God. This idea was manifestly out of harmony with the spirit of the times, and the New Haven Seminary made a particular point of teaching, that God created man able to choose between right and wrong, and could therefore justly require him to obey his laws. From this position it was obviously but a step to Perfectionism; and in fact Dr. Taylor had at one time expressly favored preaching the obligation of perfect holiness. Then at Andover the astonishing paradox founded on the seventh chapter of Romans, that Paul was "the chief of sinners" at one and the same time that he was "the chief of the apostles," had been exploded by Professor Moses Stuart, who propounded a new interpretation of that celebrated chapter, according to which the apostle's supposed confession of sin was made to refer to his pre-Christian experience. Many earnest people were beginning to ask themselves, whether Christ's mission was not in some way to give men more power over sin here in this world. If it was merely to the life after death that the salvation brought by Christ

had reference, they said, wherein was their situation any better than that of the Old Testament patriarchs.

With all these approximations to the doctrine of salvation from sin Noyes had become familiar while a student at Andover and New Haven. By their aid and by much prayer and study of the Bible he reached his own conclusion, that entire salvation from sin in this world was attained by the apostolic church just previous to the second coming, and must again emerge as the standard of Christian experience at the "end of the times of the Gentiles." An outline of the argument in his own words is presented below:

Salvation from Sin

Paul says: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." From what does he propose to save them? A few plain texts of Scripture will answer:

On the first page of the New Testament it is written: "She [Mary] shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh . . . condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. 8:3-4. "You that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled . . . to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight." Col. 1:21-22. These texts, and others like them, explicitly declare the object of the mission and sacrifice of Christ to be the salvation of his people

not merely or primarily from the consequences of their sins, but from the sins themselves.

The "glad tidings of great joy," which the angels represented as coming with the birth of Christ, were in fact tidings of things well known to the prophets and patriarchs, if they related only to the pardoning mercy of God. But if Christ came proclaiming not only the mercy of God in pardoning sin, but also his power to cleanse and preserve from sin, then truly he brought "good news" to the world; his message is worthy to be called "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."

It is obvious that the doctrine of salvation from sin is not liable to any objections drawn from the experience of those who lived before the manifestation of Christ. To adduce the sins of Moses and David as proof that the gospel does not give entire salvation from sin is to overlook altogether the distinction between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations, and in fact to assume that Christ brought no new blessings to the world. This is as absurd as it would be to undertake to disprove the reality of steam power by referring to facts that occurred a thousand years ago.

The objector may still allege that sin remained in the saints after the coming of Christ. While Christ was personally with them, the disciples exhibited a hasty and bigoted zeal in proposing to call fire from heaven to consume their opposers; carnal ambition and childish rivalry appeared among them; at the cross they all forsook their Master; and Peter, the boldest and most devoted of them, thrice denied him with cursing and oaths.

We admit the facts, but deny the inference. Salvation from sin is effected by two agencies, the spirit of God, and the truth concerning the death and resurrection of Christ. Since the sins in question were committed before the outpouring of the spirit of God on the day of Pentecost and before the death and resurrection of Christ, they stand on the same ground with the sins of the Old Testament saints. They occurred before the Christian dispensation began.

Finally it may be objected that the saints of the apostolic age who lived after the death and resurrection of Christ and the effusion of the spirit of God and were therefore certainly subjects of the Christian dispensation did nevertheless commit sin. Years after these events Peter "was to be blamed," and James was obliged to say, "In many things we offend all."

Admitting, as we freely do, that in the early days of the apostolic age sin still had place in the church, we nevertheless maintain that the time came at last when they that continued in Christ's word were made free from sin. We are fully sustained in this position by the first epistle of John. That epistle was among the latest writings of the New Testament, and as such is just the testimony we need to determine what was the power of Christianity when its fruit was ripe. Taking that epistle by itself, disencumbered as it ought to be of the experience of Jewish and semi-Christian saints, it is impossible to avoid the conviction that the theoretical and practical standard of religion there exhibited was perfect holiness. Let us hear his testimony:

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him."

"He that committeth sin is of the devil."

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

But we need not rely exclusively on the first epistle of John. If our theory concerning the progressive nature of spiritual experience is correct, we may expect to find in the later records of the Primitive Church evidence of the existence of two distinct classes of believers: a class that was yet in a carnal state, and a class that had attained perfect holiness. In the writings of Paul we find proof that this was actually the case. "We speak wisdom," says he, "among them that are perfect." I Cor. 2:6. It appears by what follows that he uses the word perfect in this case to describe those who had attained salvation from sin; for he says: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, [this is the class whom he calls perfect], but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. . . . For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" The perfection of Paul and of those among whom he spoke wisdom stands opposed to the imperfection of those

who were yet subject to sinful passions; it is therefore perfection of holiness.

In support of the general argument which we have presented, we will now adduce an individual instance of perfect holiness. And our specimen shall be the apostle Paul.

[Here follows a discussion of the famous passage in the seventh chapter of Romans, in which Paul was supposed by some to have confessed sin. The argument which Noyes uses to prove that Paul in this passage refers to his pre-Christian experience he learned at Andover from Professor Stuart; and as few since Stuart's time have ventured to uphold the former interpretation, we omit it. We also omit his discussion of Paul's remark in Phil. 3: 12, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect"; since it will be shown in the next chapter that the word perfect is here used with reference not to holiness but to experience. We proceed directly to the main contention, which is as follows:]

1. Paul asserts in a great variety of passages his union with Christ.

2. He plainly asserts his freedom from sin as the consequence of his union with Christ in such passages as these: "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" Rom. 6: 2. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom. 8: 2.

3. His writings, instead of being filled with confessions of sin, everywhere abound with vindications of his own conduct, bold assertions of his righteousness,

and appeals from human accusation to the judgment of God.

4. He constantly proposes his own life as a perfect example for imitation. "I beseech you," he says, "be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus . . . who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ." "Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

The above testimony, both negative and positive, should be weighed in connection with the fact that Paul unreservedly preached perfection to the churches, and that he made it the main object of one of his most important epistles, that to the Hebrews,* to exhibit Christianity as a dispensation of perfect holiness. In view of this we must conclude either that Paul was self-deceived and that his life was altogether at variance with the theory which he preached, or that he was a genuine example of salvation from sin.

Thus we have shown, first, that salvation from sin was the great object of the mission and sacrifice of Christ; secondly, that the sins of the Old Testament saints cannot be adduced as evidence against this doctrine, because they were committed before Christ came into the world; thirdly, that the sins of the disciples during Christ's personal ministry cannot be so adduced, because they were committed before the death and resurrection of Christ and the effusion of the spirit of

* The epistle to the Hebrews, though probably not written by Paul, was certainly written from the Pauline point of view.—G. W. N.

God; fourthly, that the sins of many in the Primitive Church after the day of Pentecost cannot be so adduced, because they were committed before the truth concerning Christ's death and resurrection was fully developed and applied; and finally, that according to the testimony of John and Paul Christianity in its maturity did actually make believers perfectly holy in this world.

CHAPTER X

TRANSITION TO HOLINESS

Confession of Religious Experience

The subject of perfect holiness was frequently touched upon in conversation between Boyle, Dutton and myself. Dutton's reports of the testimony of John B. Foot and the letters which he occasionally received from his sister excited much interest in my mind. The usual objections to the doctrine of perfection at first stood in my way. But they gradually disappeared. The objection which seemed strongest and remained last was the confession of Paul: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." While ruminating on this text, it suddenly occurred to me that there were several passages in which Christ was said to have been perfected. I immediately turned to Heb. 2: 10, 5: 8-9, and Luke 13:32, and found that in each of these instances the word "perfect" is used in connection with the idea of suffering, just as it is in Paul's confession. Christ, "though he was a son," and of course perfectly holy, yet needed to learn obedience, and to be made perfect by suffering. I saw plainly that Paul was not speaking of perfect holiness, but of perfection by suffering, or perfect experience. The difficulty was entirely removed, and I was set free from all

scriptural hindrances to the attainment of perfect holiness.

From this time, which was as early as November 1833, I began to advocate the doctrine of perfection in the Seminary and among my acquaintances. In our devotional meetings, which at that time were most interesting, I declared my belief that the time was coming when perfection-revivals would sweep over the churches as ordinary revivals had swept over the ranks of the impenitent; and I proposed to the students this trying question: "If we preach to sinners their ability to repent and the obligation of immediate submission to God, why ought we not to lay to heart our ability to be perfectly holy and the obligation of immediate conformity to the whole demand of the law?"

At last I prepared and read before the Society of the Seminary an elaborate essay on the question: "Why does not the Christian church at the present day advance as rapidly as the Primitive Church did toward the conquest of the world?" My answer in substance was this: 1. The Primitive Church freely and earnestly preached the doctrine of perfection; whereas modern churches have fallen back upon the seventh chapter of Romans, and are afraid to say anything about perfection. 2. The Primitive Church took hold on the full strength of God by the prayer of faith; whereas modern churches think that "the age of miracles is past," and dare not expect actual and immediate answers to their prayers. 3. The Primitive Church relied first on personal holiness, secondly on prayer, and thirdly on preaching, as the means of converting the world; whereas the modern churches rely first on preaching,

secondly on prayer, and lastly on personal holiness. It is not strange that their ministers, having nothing to support them, instead of pulling sinners out of the mire are often pulled into it themselves. In conclusion I proposed for our motto and as a memorial of the order in which the three great subjects ought to stand in our minds the words: *Perfection, Prayer, Preaching.* All this, though it caused excitement and interesting discussions in the Seminary, raised no alarm of heresy.

The reaction upon myself of my labors to convert others in the revival at New Haven was the immediate cause of my conviction and conversion to Perfectionism. In searching the Scriptures for truths adapted to pierce the hearts of the impenitent I was found at last pierced and writhing on the points of those very truths myself.

I well remember one discourse which I preached in different places four times within a few weeks, and every time with an increasing weight of self-application. The text was Proverbs 28: 13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." The train of thought was this: The antithesis of covering sin is confessing and forsaking sin. Mere confession is not enough. If men do not forsake their sins, they cover them, however much they may confess them. In fact confession of sin in the common way, that is without forsaking it, is the most ingenious and satisfactory way of covering it. When a man's sins lie before him in all their hatefulness, what better way can he take to cover them than to spread a neat white confession over them? This hides their deformity from himself and his fellow-men.

But God sees through this cover, and must abhor this whole system of sinning and confessing and sinning again, which prevails in the churches. Common sense as applied to the dealings of men with each other repudiates it. If a man steals from you today and afterward confesses it, you forgive him. But if he steals again tomorrow and again confesses it, you begin to distrust him. Perhaps, however, you forgive him the second time. But if he steals the third day, and confesses the third time even with tears, you account his confession as bad as his theft, an insult added to injury, a cover of iniquity. Yet this is the way that men who profess to be religious are dealing with God all over the land. From day to day, from sabbath to sabbath, from year to year, in the closet, the family, and the church, they confess the same sins over and over and never forsake them; never expect to forsake them. The thought I have thus sketched was like a barbed arrow in my heart. Every time I handled it, it entered deeper. It brought me into an agony of conviction, from which I knew there was no escape except by the abandonment once for all of the whole body of sin. This same discourse also took away Dutton's old "hope," and placed him with me in the condition of a convicted sinner.

All this might have resulted in no decisive change, if I had not previously seen the way open into perfect holiness. But with clear views on this subject I found the whole force of my convictions of sin impelling me toward a radical spiritual revolution. Yet I knew I had been converted before in some sense, and had served God with zeal. "How can it be," I asked myself,

"that I must give up the past and be converted again?" The following reasonings removed my difficulties on this point. I perceived that there are three distinct states of the heart: First, a state in which a preponderance of the affections is toward the world. This is irreligion. Second, a state in which a preponderance of the affections is toward God, though more or less attachment to the world still remains. This is the double-minded state, the state of ordinary sinful religion. Third, a state in which all the affections of the heart are given to God. In this state there is no seditious minority of the affections to embarrass and occasionally defeat the "governing purpose." Of course there is no sin. This is certainly the state of the saints in heaven; and I was satified that it is attainable on earth, and that some in the Primitive Church did attain it. I saw that the second of the states above described, though it may more conformable to the law, which requires the whole be valuable as a preparation for ultimate holiness, is no heart, than the first. It was evident to me also, that the transition from the double-minded state to perfect holiness requires a radical conversion as really as the transition from impenitence to the double-minded state. Thus I learned to turn my back on my first conversion and press toward a second.

Still the question would arise, "How shall I dispose of my blessed experience of God's love? Has he been approving me as a sinner, or has my supposed communion with him been a delusion?" I found a satisfactory answer in the following passages: "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." "Despisest thou the

riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" I discovered that the principle involved in these sayings was as applicable to spiritual as to physical blessings; that I had no more right to infer God's approbation of my moral state from the fact that he had sent the sunshine and the rain of his spirit upon me, than the wicked of the world have to infer his approval of them, because he gives them literal sunshine and rain. As he had given me temporal blessings when I was wholly a worldling, that he might effect my first conversion, so he had given me spiritual blessings in my sinful-religious state, that he might prepare me for conversion to perfect holiness.

At last the pressure of conviction became so great, that I lost all relish for the revival labors in which I was engaged; not because I cared less for souls, but because I felt that it was folly to try to save others while I myself was not saved. At one of the meetings I stated with all sincerity my views of my case, and remarked that the "sinners" to whom I had preached, if they could know my situation, might fairly say to me: "Physician, heal thyself"; "first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." From that time I withdrew from public effort as far as I could consistently with my positive engagements, and gave myself up to prayer, searching the Scriptures, and inquiry after salvation from sin. My appetite forsook me and for a week before I found peace I took but little food.

The law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God *with all thy heart,*" was ever before my mind as the only

standard of righteousness, the very beginning of all virtue. In the blaze of that law all my works and experiences and hopes faded into vanity. I saw immeasurable wickedness within me. Considering the light and privileges I had enjoyed it seemed to me that I was indeed the very "chief of sinners," blacker with guilt than even the devils in the lowest hell. I loathed my life and desired rather to die and go to judgment at once, even if I were to be damned, than go on in sin treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

The question with me was not how to get relief from this distress nor how to be saved at last from hell, but how to fulfill now the righteousness of the law. The solution of this question, though now it seems simple, was then a matter of great difficulty. The ideas of faith current in that day were few and meager. I had been trained in the revival doctrines of "submitting to the will of God" and "making benevolence the governing purpose," but my attention had never been directed to faith as fundamentally related to salvation from sin.

The circumstance which finally fixed my eye on faith was this: Dutton, who had gone hand in hand with me into the dark valley of conviction, was telling me one day about the Albany Perfectionists, and mentioned that they made great account of faith. The remark caught my attention, and I immediately went through the New Testament noting all I found on this subject. At the end of the examination I was greatly astonished at the magnitude of the subject as exhibited in the Bible and my own ignorance of it. In the gos-

pels I found Christ always speaking to those who sought his help in this manner: "If thou canst believe, thou shalt be made whole." "According to thy faith be it unto thee." "Thy faith hath made thee whole." "O woman, great is thy faith." In all the epistles I saw the same idea of the agency of faith transferred from bodily to spiritual therapeutics. In a word I was convinced that faith occupies the same central place in Bible theology as "governing purposes" occupy in the system of the revivalists. This was the beginning of daylight to my soul.

But it was only the beginning. Though I had thus found the clue of faith, I had not yet reached the resting-place to which it leads. My heart still anxiously pondered the question, How shall I get this faith? I felt like one groping for a door in the dark without a guide. Sometimes I looked wistfully toward Albany, and almost resolved to go to John B. Foot or some other person who, I supposed, had experience of faith. In this state of mind Dutton and I sought out an old woman, whom I had met in a morning prayer meeting. She was reported crazy, but Dutton thought this a sign in her favor, as the western Perfectionists were generally accounted crazy. She appeared to be really deranged. Her remarks about believing, however, had a good effect on my mind. She would enter into no explanations, but treated our difficulties as contemptible. "Oh," said she, "if you cannot believe what God says, you cannot expect anything." This was the right answer to our inquiries, whether the credit of it was due to her sagacity or not.

On the evening of the same day I was under the

necessity of attending an inquiry meeting at Mr. Benjamin's in Orange Street. I had no heart for the appropriate labors of the meeting. I was an almost despairing inquirer myself, and it was misery to attempt to instruct others. As I sat brooding over my difficulties and prospects, I listlessly opened my Bible and my eye fell upon these words: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The words seemed to glow upon the page, and my spirit heard a voice from heaven through them promising me the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the second birth. I opened the Bible again in the spirit of Samuel, when he said: "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth," and these words were before me: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory forever and ever." Again my soul drank in a spiritual promise appropriate to my situation, an assurance of everlasting victory. Once more I opened the book, and these words met my view: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." I closed the book, and went home with hopeful feelings, believing that I had conversed with God, that my course was marked out,

that I was on the verge of the salvation which I sought.

Faith as a grain of mustard seed was in my heart; but its expansion into full consciousness of spiritual life and peace required yet another step, confession. The next morning I recurred to the passage which had been my guide in my first conversion: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." I saw in this passage what I had not seen distinctly before, the power of Christ's resurrection as the center-point of faith, and the necessity of confession as the complement of belief. As I reflected on this last point, it flashed across my mind that the work was done, that Christ was in me with the power of his resurrection, and that it only remained for me to confess it before the world in order to enjoy the consciousness of it. I determined at once to confess Christ in me a Savior from sin at all hazards; and though I did not immediately have all the feelings which I hoped for, I knew I was walking in the truth, and went forward fearlessly and with hopeful peace.

It fell to my lot to preach that evening at the Free Church. I prepared myself during the day for an unflinching testimony against all sin. When I announced from the desk my text, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," I felt, and I doubt not the audience felt, that I was entering upon a new field of theology. I insisted upon the literal meaning of the text, and did

my best to prove that sinners are not Christians. I said nothing about my own state, but I knew that my testimony would be thrust back upon me and that I should consequently be obliged to confess myself saved from sin. So in fact it proved.

I went home with a feeling that I had committed myself irreversibly, and on my bed that night I received the baptism which I desired and expected. Three times in quick succession a stream of eternal love gushed through my heart, and rolled back again to its source. "Joy unspeakable and full of glory" filled my soul. All fear and doubt and condemnation passed away. I knew that my heart was clean, and that the Father and the Son had come and made it their abode.

The next morning one of the theological students, who had heard my discourse at the Free Church the evening before, came to labor with me in relation to it. He thought it altogether too stringent, and wished to know if I really meant what I said, that a sinner cannot be a Christian. I assured him that I did so mean. Then came, as I expected, the *argumentum ad hominem.* "If this is your doctrine," said he, "you unchurch yourself as well as others. Don't you commit sin?" It was a greater thing to confess holiness in those days than it is now. I knew that my answer would plunge me into the depths of contempt; but I answered deliberately and firmly, "No." The man stared as though a thunderbolt had fallen before him. At first he seemed to doubt his own senses and asked the question again. When I had convinced him that I actually professed to be free from sin, he went away

to tell the news. Within a few hours the word passed through the college and city: "Noyes says he is perfect"; and on the heels of this went the report: "Noyes is crazy." Thus my confession was made and I began to suffer the consequences.

Four days after professing himself saved from sin Noyes wrote a letter to his mother describing his experience. His sister Charlotte mentions in her reminiscences seeing her mother standing in the kitchen, holding the letter with wet hands, and exclaiming: "What *does* John mean?"

CHAPTER XI

BEGINNINGS OF NEW HAVEN PERFECTIONISM

February 20, 1834, was the date on which Noyes first declared himself saved from sin. This date was ever afterward held most memorable by Noyes and his followers. In the Oneida Community February 20th was regarded as a spiritual New Year's Day—the "high tide of the spirit" it was called—and each year it was celebrated with appropriate ceremonies. The opposite date, August 20th, was called the "high tide of the flesh," and at that season special aids against temptation were often invoked.

Confession of Religious Experience

My first effort after I reached the shore of peace was to help Brother Dutton out of the deep waters. I labored much to convince him of the truth of the saying, "God hath given to us eternal life." He assented to all I said, but could not realize and confess eternal life in himself. Indeed my exertions to save him seemed only to sink him deeper in despair. He soon left me and went to Albany, where he became a disciple of John B. Foot, and embraced the Wesleyan type of holiness which was in vogue among the New York Perfectionists.

The first person who joined me in the faith of holiness was Abigail Merwin, a member of the Free Church and a sister of the young man whose singular conversion was the commencement of the revival. I had no acquaintance with her at the time when I found salvation, but had been informed a short time before that she was under conviction and wished to have an interview with me. This occurred to my remembrance in the course of the day on which I made my confession, and I immediately called on Mr. Benjamin, her brother-in-law, with whom she resided, and was introduced to her. She appeared to be in perplexity, and eager for the truth. After a few preliminary inquiries and explanations I put to her the question: "Will you receive Christ as a *whole Savior* and confess him before the world?" She answered promptly: "I will." Immediately a manifest change came over her spirit. Her countenance began to beam with joy. She said afterward that she received at this time a baptism of the glory of God, which so overwhelmed her that she seemed on the point of passing to the other world.

The next morning at the prayer-meeting, which she as well as I usually attended, I stood up with a hymn-book in my hand and remarked that I was about to read a hymn which we had often sung with the mouth but never with the heart. I requested that all who could now sing it in earnest, realizing and appropriating its sentiments, should stand up and sing it with me. I then read the following:

"Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer,
Welcome to this heart of mine.

Lord, I make a full surrender;
Every power and thought be thine;
Thine entirely
Through eternal ages thine.

"Known to all to be thy mansion,
Earth and hell will disappear,
Or in vain attempt possession,
When they find the Lord is near.
Shout, O Zion!
Shout, ye saints, the Lord is here!"

Abigail Merwin and one other woman stood up, and we sang the hymn together. Thus she publicly professed holiness. From this time she made rapid advances in the knowledge of Bible truth. She had a surprising readiness of apprehension and facility of communication. Her testimony was bold and yet modest. Her power of argument and her position as my first convert placed her with me in the front of the battle and in the full glare of the public gaze, and she nobly sustained the trial. Even the enemies of the doctrine she advocated admired the serenity of her spirit and the clearness of her mind.

The influence of Abigail Merwin more than anything else opened for me an entrance into the Free Church, and ultimately enabled me to overcome the hostility of Boyle. Her brother-in-law, Benjamin, who was deacon of the Free Church, his wife, and Abigail's brother immediately followed her in the profession and advocacy of holiness. Thus a standpoint was gained. The leading men of the Free Church were taken by surprise, and until they had time to recover themselves by consultation with higher theolo-

gians they were compelled to bow the knee to the truth. Even Townshend, the father of the Free Church, was among the anxious inquirers; and Stephen Cook, the publisher of the *Christian Spectator,* actually made a partial and temporary profession of holiness.

In the meantime I was busily engaged in circulating my new views in other ways. I wrote letters giving an account of my experience to an extensive circle of friends with whom I was in correspondence. On the morning of my declaration I received by mail invitations to preach from three distant places. In reply to these proposals I defined my new position, and stated that the change of my views was such that the applicants would probably not wish to employ me. I wrote to the Missionary Brethren at Andover withdrawing my pledge to go on a foreign mission and briefly stating my reasons. This drew from Champion, the missionary who afterward went to Africa, an expostulatory reply asking for a more full explanation of my course. I wrote again stating that I felt bound to withdraw my pledge for three reasons: first, because I now knew that I was not a Christian when I made it; second, because I had discovered that God was my owner and had the right to direct me by his Spirit, and therefore I had no right to let myself unreservedly to the missionary society; third, because I saw that I was already on missionary ground, among a people who though professedly Christian needed to be converted quite as much as the heathen. This correspondence and other means of report communicated much of the agitation which existed at New Haven to the theological seminary at Andover.

At the same time I set the press to work scattering the truth. In the heat of the conflict which my confession had brought upon me I put on paper references to all the texts I could find in the New Testament indicating that perfect holiness is the standard of Christianity. A friendly printer, who was interested in my views, struck off for me within a few days three successive hand-bills, five hundred copies of each. Their titles were: *He that Committeth Sin is of the Devil, The New Covenant* and *The Second Coming of the Son of Man.* These were scattered through the city and sent by mail in every direction. Abigail Merwin even dispatched packages of them to missionary stations in distant parts of the world.

Mr. Boyle was absent at a protracted meeting in Hartford when I began the testimony of holiness. On his return he set himself to counteract my operations in his church. He preached on the text which I had handled, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and endeavored to subvert the doctrine which I had built upon it. He prayed against the disturbing influences which were coming in upon his flock. At length I called upon him. Our interview was to me one of fearful interest. I respected and loved him, and was afraid he would reject the truth. He treated me with a good degree of politeness, but resisted my testimony. His cold words were as daggers to my heart. Finally as I was turning to leave I asked him if he would examine the subject. A new spirit seemed then to come upon him. He answered, "I will"; and we parted with kind words and hopes of continued fellowship.

Thenceforth he ceased to oppose me and began to advocate the theory of holiness.

Soon after this interview he requested me to visit among his church members, and gave me several of their names and places of residence. I traveled the streets on this commission till my feet were blistered. At length Amos Townshend, who at this time had recovered his equilibrium and was beginning to see the necessity of taking active measures to stop the fire I was scattering, sent me notice of a vote of the church requesting me to discontinue my communications with its members. I immediately complied with his request.

While these things were passing I was engaged almost every hour in answering inquiries and disputing with adversaries. The students of the College and Theological Seminary flocked to my room, some to see the "perfect man" as they would go to see an elephant or any other curiosity, and others to argue me down or puzzle me with objections. At last I was weary of being visited as a "show," and I told one theological student that he came to "quiz" me and refused to talk with him. The report of this affair increased the belief, which many were busily spreading in the city, that I was crazy. Another young man from the College called upon me, apparently to make honest inquiries but probably from motives of curiosity. After answering his objections to the doctrine of holiness, I began to assail his conscience with the sharpest truths of the word of God. He became serious, turned pale, and at last, when his confidence in his carnal religion failed within him, staggered back and fainted. On recovering himself he went away and laid his case be-

fore Dr. Bacon, the pastor of the Center Church, who helped him repair his old hope. He never called on me again.

The flood of contention which poured in upon me from the College and Seminary kept my intellectual powers in a state of intense energy for several weeks. I never grew faster than at that time. A feeling of fearful responsibility rested upon me. It seemed as though God in giving me the treasure of the gospel had placed me in the midst of the keenest and fiercest disputers of this world, that its defensibility might be thoroughly tested. I felt that I must fairly answer every fair objection to the doctrine of holiness, or sink myself. If I did not satisfy objectors, I usually silenced them; and at all events I got hold of the truth for myself in the struggle.

Within a week or two after my confession the question whether perfect holiness is attainable in this life was brought forward as a subject of debate in the Society of the Theological Seminary. Dr. Taylor was in the chair. I was specially requested to open the debate by presenting a synopsis of my theory. I read the tenth chapter of Hebrews, and commented on it, aiming to clear a path for my doctrine by showing the difference between the law and the gospel. I dwelt particularly on the 10th, 14th, and 16th verses as proofs of the advent of perfection by the sacrifice of Christ. When I came to speak of objections, I made this general remark: "Holiness is the manifest object of God in all his dealings with man, and especially in his gift of the Bible. It ought to be presumed therefore that there is nothing in the Bible which by fair

interpretation can be turned against that object, or be made a hindrance in the way of men's attaining it. People who go to the Bible for objections to the doctrine of holiness go to God's own armory for weapons to fight him with." Dr. Taylor had been growing quite uneasy, and at this point he interrupted me, saying with much heat that my language was disrespectful, and that he would not sit in the chair if I was to be allowed to say such things. Much excitement ensued. I stood still till it passed. A motion was made and carried that I should not be allowed to say such things. I submitted to it, and then went through with what I had further to say. The decision of the debate by Dr. Taylor and also by the Society was of course unfavorable to my views.

During these first days of my experience in Perfectionism I certainly did not regard myself as perfect in any such sense as excludes the expectation of discipline and improvement. On the contrary, from the very beginning my heart's most earnest desire and prayer to God was that I might be "made perfect by full fellowship with the sufferings of Christ"; and from that time till now all my tribulations have been occasions of thanksgiving, because I have regarded them as answers to that first prayer and as pledges of God's faithfulness in completing the work then begun. The distinction between being free from sin on the one hand and being past all improvement on the other, however obscure it may be to some, was plain to me as soon as I knew by experience what freedom from sin really was. To those who endeavored to confound that distinction and crowd me into a profession of un-

improvable perfection I said: "I do not pretend to perfection in externals. I only claim purity of heart and the answer of a good conscience toward God. A book may be true and perfect in sentiment and yet be deficient in graces of style and typographical accuracy."

The sentiment of Paul, "Ye are not under law, but under grace," was an instinct of my heart rather than a theory of my head at this time. I knew that my justification came at first not by my own obedience to law but by the infusion of the Spirit, and to the same agency I looked for its continuance. When those with whom I disputed talked about the vast breadth of the law, criticised the minutiæ of my outward conduct, and taunted me with sin, I was content, if I could not satisfy them, to feel that God's method of dealing with me was not like theirs. I perceived that his eye was on the root and not on the branches of my character, and my own eye instinctively turned the same way, though my previous training had tended to make me exceedingly scrupulous about externals. With the consciousness of his approbation in my heart, I could not stand as a culprit at the bar of the law or torment myself with doubtful disputations of conscience, however strenuously my adversaries visible and invisible labored to bring me into the snare.

Once only for a moment I was on the verge of condemnation. The occasion of my trouble, however, was not any apparent breach of the common rules of legality, but an affair of quite an opposite character. I found from the time when I yielded my whole heart to God, that the Spirit which had taken possession of

me was jealous of the formal machinery of religion in which I had hitherto worked. My old conscience told me to get down on my knees three or four times in a day and pray by the hour together as I used to do. But the Spirit manifestly opposed this dictation, and I found myself constrained to refuse going through the usual vocal ceremonies both in private circles and in public meetings. The contention between my old conscience and the dictates of the Spirit at last came to a crisis. While on my way to attend a meeting, which I had been previously engaged to conduct, I was considering what course to take; and I found myself strongly inclined by my old habits to go through the usual forms, preach to "sinners," and try to get up a revival excitement. But something in my heart resisted this impulse. I felt that God was jealous. His spirit seemed to withdraw, and my heart felt the torture of an infinite void. I realized the meaning of those words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" My body was so weak that I stood still in the street, and almost fainted. But it was only for a moment. My heart looked upward as it sank, and immediately I found myself again in the keeping of everlasting love. And now my old conscience was gone. Its questionings no longer interfered with the dictates of my spiritual guide. I conducted the meeting with a simplicity which was evidently mortifying to my old revival friends, took the occasion to confess and preach salvation from sin, and went home with a feeling which a child may be supposed to have when it is fairly weaned from its mother.

I had in those days abundant evidence of God's

providential care over me. "Good luck," as the world would call it, met me at every turn. I had also a vivid consciousness of the presence of God in my heart. Paul's testimony, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," was mine. With these blessings around and within me I had naturally a feeling of buoyancy and exultation, which exhibited itself in my demeanor. Some that watched for evil said I was proud. I told them it was true; I was proud, not of myself but of God.

Not long after the debate in the Seminary described on a previous page, Dr. Taylor called at my room to notify me that I was soon to be tried by the Association which licensed me. He tarried awhile, and we had a dispute of some length. He complained of me for broaching new views in the Seminary without consulting him; apprised me that he had dealt with one Perfectionist before, and had convinced him of sin; and intimated that he should serve me in the same way. I appealed to my experience, declaring that I had received the Holy Spirit and could not be turned from my course by man. He laughed my declaration to scorn, asserting that it is physically impossible for any man to feel the Spirit of God. I replied that I certainly had felt the Spirit of God not only in my soul but in every fiber of my body. In the course of the conversation I insisted that his own views of man's perfect ability to obey the law of God led directly to Perfectionism. His answer in substance was, that while man was perfectly able to keep the law and God had a perfect right to require him to do so, yet a "gracious system," in which perfect obedience was not re-

quired, would save a greater number than would otherwise be saved, and God in his benevolence had therefore adopted such a system. He said that my system was nothing but the old Wesleyan scheme, which had been tried and had failed; that I might find a few followers among ignorant people, but not among the intelligent. I observed that Boyle was a man of some intelligence and that he assented to my views. The Doctor denied this, saying that he had conversed with Boyle a short time before and found him not on Perfectionist ground. In reply to intimations that I was young and not so wise as himself, I claimed the advantage of him on the ground that "he that doeth the will of God shall know of the doctrine." He insisted that he had as much interest in that promise as I. Thereupon I asked him if he did not commit sin. He admitted that he did. I then repeated the text: "He that committeth sin is of the devil." "You say then," said he, "that I am of the devil, do you?" "No," said I. "You said you committed sin, and I only quoted the words from the Bible: 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.'" "Well," said he, "you are a sinner now, if you were not when I came in, for you have not treated me courteously." I observed that the best kind of courtesy in such a case was plainness of speech. He then went away. This interview was certainly distressing to me, for I had great reverence and I might say affection for Dr. Taylor, and dreaded a collision with him. But it left no sting behind. On the contrary I felt more free and peaceful afterward, as a soldier might feel after having passed the deadliest spot in the breach.

In the latter part of April I received an invitation from Mr. Chapman, pastor of the Congregational Church in Prospect, Connecticut, to labor among his people. I went and remained ten days; preached every evening and three times on each Sabbath. Boyle had been there before, and had shaken the church to its foundations. Almost every member of the church was cut down. It was a scene of overwhelming interest; yet all was still and solemn. Dr. Taylor had said that I might find here and there a simple-minded man or a few silly women to impose upon. But in Prospect the very best of the inhabitants fell under the sword of God's truth, and pressed into the kingdom of holiness.

Special Meeting of the Association of the Western District of New Haven County in the Theological lecture room at Yale College April 16, 1834

Mr. John H. Noyes, at the request of the Association, made a statement of his peculiar opinions respecting the doctrine of Christian perfection; whereupon, on motion of Dr. Taylor, the following resolution was adopted:

Whereas, Mr. Noyes has adopted views on the doctrine of Christian perfection, which in the opinion of this Association are erroneous, unscriptural, and inconsistent with his usefulness as a preacher of the gospel, and such as in his own opinion are inconsistent with his retaining his license;

Therefore, Resolved, that without impeaching the Christian character of Mr. Noyes this Association do hereby recall his license to preach the gospel.

Confession of Religious Experience

The Association remained in session. Boyle sat with them by invitation. On returning to my room I found just arrived from the press a quantity of the tract entitled *Paul not Carnal,* which I had sent to the printer a few days before. I took a handful, went back to the session room, thrust them into the hands of Boyle, who sat near the door, and he distributed them among the ministers.

Soon after this Dr. Taylor called upon me again, and signified to me the wish of the Faculty that I withdraw altogether from the college premises. My room was in the college chapel. My brother, who belonged to the classical department, occupied it with me. I suggested to the Doctor that it would be inconvenient for me to remove my things immediately and, as my brother would continue to occupy the room, it might be well to allow me to remain till the end of the term, which was near its close. He assented, and I remained.

I had now lost my standing in the Free Church, in the ministry, and in the College. My good name in the great world was gone. My friends were fast falling away. I was beginning to be indeed an outcast. Yet I rejoiced and leaped for joy. Sincerely I declared that I was glad when I got rid of my reputation. Some person asked me whether I should continue to preach now that the clergy had taken away my license. I replied: "I have taken away their license to sin, and they keep on sinning. So, though they have taken away my license to preach, I shall keep on preaching."

CHAPTER XII

GATHERING CLOUDS

Confession of Religious Experience

Charles H. Weld, a minister and the son of a New England minister of some distinction, was living with a brother at Hartford at the time when I commenced the testimony of holiness. He was about twelve years older than I. In consequence of ill health of body and mind he did not attempt regular preaching, but labored as an assistant of Dr. Hawes. He was acquainted with Boyle. They conversed about the new doctrine, when the news of it first reached Hartford. Boyle spoke unfavorably, but Weld cautioned him to beware of rash opposition.

Some weeks afterward Weld came to New Haven and took lodgings with Boyle. His object was to put himself in communication with me. Boyle introduced us at the close of a meeting, and gave me some account of Weld's experience. We soon became intimate. There was much in his character that attracted my sympathy. He was profoundly versed in spiritual mysteries, was highly intellectual, and seemed to be filled with the most lovely benevolence. We were never weary of conversing. I respected his apparent wisdom and was desirous of profiting by it.

I soon found that there was a tendency in him to

assume a fatherly relation toward me. He received my communications on the subject of holiness and the second coming with readiness and deference, but criticised my manner of presenting them as being too abrupt and alarming. He gave me to understand that he had exercised a paternal supervision over Finney, Boyle, Lansing, his brother Theodore and others; and it was not long before he established himself as privy counsellor to me. In fact it appeared from his account of his experience, that he had in a certain sense preceded me in the truth. I learned from him that, when he was at Andover some eight or ten years before, he passed through a series of singular spiritual exercises in which full redemption of soul and body was set before him as attainable and was promised to him on condition of his practising certain austerities for a specific period. He failed to fulfill the condition, and in consequence fell into a state of horrible despair, from the effects of which he had never entirely recovered. This experience, however, gave him so much advantage in comprehending and judging my disclosures, that he considered himself as in some sense entitled to take the lead of me. I did not object, for I certainly had no idea at that time of being a leader myself.

I perceived, however, in process of time that his plan of softening down my testimony did not work well in his own case. He remained day after day a prisoner to condemnation, seeing the glory of the truth and talking about it with abundant wisdom, but not realizing and confessing it in himself. He was like a sick doctor under the care of another more

healthy but not so learned as himself. He allowed me to give him medicines, but took upon him to direct how they should be mixed and when they should be administered. He was not fond of strong, bitter doses. When I saw that he was not likely to get well under my practice modified by his directions, I began to fall back upon my own judgment and proposed more decisive measures.

Boyle was at this time approaching the crisis of his convictions. I had an interview with him, and by a resolute effort succeeded in bringing him to a confession of Christ. The following is an account of the scene in his own words: "The question was put to me: 'Will you take Christ as a whole Savior?' I answered with all my heart: 'I will.' Instantly the power of God rushed upon me like a flood. The fire was kindled upon his altar just dedicated to him, and I felt that I was introduced into a new world. Old things immediately passed away and all things became new."

Weld was present at this interview, and was much affected by the truth that was uttered and the events that passed before him. I endeavored to bring him also to a decision and partially succeeded. But his confession was not prompt and unequivocal like Boyle's, and was attended with no satisfactory results. He remained some days in his usual doubtful position. At last I told him plainly that his mild method of treating his case would never effect anything; that he must look the law of God in the face and submit to the full pressure of the truth that "he that committeth sin is of the devil." He assented to what I said

and seemed willing that I should deal with him according to my own judgment.

This was on the day of the State Fast. Boyle was absent attending a protracted meeting in a neighboring town, and had requested Weld to fill his place in the services of the day at the Free Church. After the conversation just mentioned he conducted the public exercises of the forenoon in the usual manner but with considerable embarrassment. During the intermission he told me that he could not preach in the afternoon, for God had made it clear to him that I ought to take his place. I replied that I had no objection, if the deacons of the church were willing. He went to Benjamin and Townshend and obtained their consent. I told him that, if I preached, I should say some cruel things. He bade me follow my own heart.

He went into the desk with me and introduced me to the congregation with a frank confession of his confidence in the truth of the doctrines I taught and I chose for the subject of my discourse these words: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but an exhortation to candor. He then took his seat among the congregation on the right side of the house. he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." I had not premeditated at all, but my thoughts were clear and my utterance free. My aim was to show that the ministration of Christ was far more searching and terrible

than any that went before; that he came for judgment, and that judgment came by the spiritual revelation of those fiery truths concerning sin and holiness, which were developed by Christ and his apostles and which were now again manifesting themselves; that we were living not in the dispensation of water but in the dispensation of the Holy Ghost and of fire; that we were on the floor of Christ, and his fan was waving over us; that his Spirit and gospel were among us separating the chaff from the wheat, and soon we should be in the garner or in the fire.

In the midst of my discourse I was interrupted by a strange sound. I looked around and saw Weld sitting with his eyes closed, his countenance black, his hands waving up and down, and his lungs laboring with long, rattling breaths. It was the most awful scene of agony I ever witnessed. Many fled from it in dismay. At length a crisis came. Weld gradually became quiet, and gleams of joy appeared on his countenance. He stood up, and gazed slowly around upon the people with an eye of angelic brilliancy. After this he relapsed partially into his former state. The congregation retired. I remained with a few others till the paroxysm passed off, and then conducted him to his room at Mr. Boyle's. He returned soon after to Hartford.

Weld's own account of the immediate occasion of his distress was this: From the beginning of my discourse the words of my mouth were like fire to his spirit. They scorched him more and more till he could endure no longer, and he thought of rising and smiting me in the pulpit. Instantly upon this the word

came to him: "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophet no harm." Then he began to sink into the fathomless depths of despair.

In the latter part of April I met Weld at Bethany. Since the affair at the Free Church he had remained in an equivocal state. Nevertheless he had continued to communicate with the believers in New Haven, and had not lost his influence over them or me. He had advanced considerably in mysticism. It was evident that he considered himself exalted by his sufferings, and he was more than ever inclined to be a leader to me. I was at that time far from being qualified or disposed to pass judgment on his character, and we resumed our former relations with all cordiality.

The New York anniversary meetings of the clergy were approaching. Weld proposed to attend them, and wished to take me with him. The gathering of ministers and religious persons from all parts of the country, which was expected on this occasion, seemed to offer a grand opportunity for disseminating our views. Weld's acquaintance with the clergy was extensive and might be of service in introducing me among them. Influenced partly by these considerations I placed myself at his disposal.

The principal work, however, which I intended to accomplish while in New York, was one which, easy as it seemed then, has since proved to be a labor of many years and is not accomplished yet.* I proposed to myself the task of clearing Perfectionism of the disreputable mysticisms and barbarisms which had

* This was written in 1844.—G. W. N

begun to discredit it. A multitude of stories were afloat about the fantastic sayings and doings of New York Perfectionists. Many of those stories I knew were true; and conscious as I was that the views and spirit which I had received were diametrically opposed to those sayings and doings, I determined to bear my testimony against them.

The case was this. The spiritual department of religion was then even more than now a wild uncultivated region traversed almost only by fanatics and spiritual "squatters." Perfectionism was essentially a spiritual development, and as such was exposed, especially in the inexperience of its infancy, to all the diseases and barbarisms of the region to which it belonged. The thing to be done, though I was not then aware of it, was not to shield the new colony from the influences which surrounded it by such partial defensive measures as disclaimers and acts of disfellowship, but to clear up and civilize the whole spiritual region. This was not to be accomplished by a pamphlet or two, nor in any way by a spiritual novice. The qualifications requisite for the undertaking were an experimental knowledge of spiritual philosophy, an acquaintance with the principalities of the invisible world, practical skill in discriminating between divine and diabolical manifestations and impressions, and a boldness, which rough experience only can give, in facing and exposing spiritual impostors. It will be seen in the progress of this narrative that God, who was wiser than I, instead of allowing me to do immediately what I intended to do when I went to New York, put me into a school of terrible experience

where I might gain the needful qualifications for my task.

During our passage to New York and while we remained there together Weld and I conversed much on spiritual subjects. The turn which he gave to our communications was too imaginative to be healthy. His mind ran on such subjects as the official arrangements of the coming dispensation, the physical enjoyments of the resurrection state, and spiritual marriage. Holiness was not the center of his thoughts; and though it was of mine, I yielded myself for the time to his leadings, not suspecting snares and thinking him my superior in spiritual judgment.

We took lodgings at Tammany Hall, where we remained till Weld left the city. We had at first little money, but Weld afterward obtained some from a friend. The routine exercises of the anniversaries did not attract much of our attention. I noticed particularly, however, the "fluttering" caused by the report which had gone abroad about New Haven Perfectionism. Several of the speakers alluded to that subject in a manner that indicated ill suppressed bitterness and anxiety.

I placed myself under Weld's directions in regard to my personal labors with the clergy and others. He sent me first to an interview with James Latourette, with whom he was previously acquainted. From the conversation of Foot, Dutton and others who called soon after our arrival I had learned that Latourette was regarded as the emperor of the scattered groups of Perfectionists in the state of New York. I expected to find him far in advance of myself in the wisdom of

holiness, and was prepared to yield him due deference. I was disappointed. My interview with him satisfied me that he was a self-conceited, uncivilized religionist of the very class against whose views and practices I determined to protest. The subject of our conversation was the security of the saints, *i.e.*, whether a person who had once attained perfect holiness could ever backslide into sin. After considerable discourse I quoted the text: "Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." He replied that he had received that promise, but he had not thought it expedient to preach the doctrine, lest it should beget carelessness. Afterwards he invited me to attend his meeting and speak. I said: "If I speak, I shall preach the security." He answered: "Speak what the Lord gives you." I attended the meeting, and spoke warmly and at length on the text: "He that sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." While I was speaking he sealed what I said with an "Amen" or "Hallelujah" at almost every sentence. After the meeting there seemed to be no small stir in the minds of the people about my testimony. One said: "If that doctrine is true, I am no Christian." Another said: "I know the doctrine is not true, for I have been converted and backslidden two or three times." So the word went round. Immediately Latourette began to condemn my testimony; and before I had time for argument roared upon me with a voice of thunder: "Your doctrine is from hell! Get thee behind me, Satan!" So I left the meeting, overborne not by argument but by clamor.

After this Weld directed me to call on a clergyman

by the name of Ingersoll, who was then officiating in the Chatham Street Chapel. This gentleman, when he learned that I was a Perfectionist, commenced an assault upon me. "Young man," said he, "I know all about your doctrine, and I shall convince you that it is false." "Very well," said I. "If you can do what you say, I shall be very willing to give up my error. You shall have an opportunity to try." Thereupon we sat down, and disputed about an hour; and then parted certainly without his having made any headway in fulfilling his boast.

By Weld's suggestion I next called on Mrs. Finney, wife of Rev. Charles G. Finney, who was then absent on a voyage for his health. When I made known to Mrs. Finney my profession and my object in calling, she entered into conversation with me on spiritual subjects with considerable interest. I gathered from what she said, that she and her husband were thinking much on the subject of holiness, but were fearful of the errors and fanaticisms connected with it. One of her remarks was substantially as follows: "Mr. Finney sometimes tells me that *I* may be perfect, but that it will not answer for him, as it would ruin his influence." She asked me to pray with her children, which I did. I imagined that her object in this was to try my holiness by the "new measure" test, that is, to see whether I could pray well. Whether I acquitted myself to her satisfaction I never ascertained.

Weld engaged me in discourse with several other persons. At the end of about a week he returned to Hartford, and I removed to a boarding-house in Leonard Street, intending to devote myself to writing.

CHAPTER XIII

THE STORM

Confession of Religious Experience

I come now to a period of three weeks in my religious history, which was full of singular events—so full that I find great difficulty in recollecting and arranging its various scenes. If the time of this period were to be measured by the amount of experience through which I passed, by the sufferings which I endured, by the mental progress which I made, and by the revolution of character which was the result, it might deserve to be called three years.

On sitting down to my proposed task of writing a tract on Perfectionism I found myself much straitened in spirit and mind. My thoughts refused to take the direction which I had prescribed for them, and I soon became convinced that God was calling my attention to other subjects than those I had chosen; that the thinking I had to do was to be for myself instead of for others.

The first subject toward which the instincts of my heart turned was the resurrection. The gospel which I had received and preached was based on the idea that faith identifies the soul with Christ, so that by his death and resurrection the believer dies and rises again spiritually, and thus, so far as sin is concerned, is

placed beyond the grave in "heavenly places" with Christ. I now began to think that I had given this idea but half its legitimate scope. Why ought I not to avail myself of Christ's resurrection fully, and by it overcome death as well as sin?

Not in a presumptuous spirit, but under a solemn sense of duty resulting from what I regarded as logical deductions of truth, I summoned all my powers to an act of faith in Christ as the Savior of the body as well as the soul. A spirit of wrestling prayer for victory over death came upon me. It was not so much the act of dying that I wished to be delivered from as the spiritual power of death which broods over all men. What I sought I obtained. From that time to this I have acknowledged and felt no allegiance to death.

As it has been frequently reported that I have professed a belief that I should never die, I will briefly define my position in relation to this point. The conclusions to which I came at the period under consideration, and which I have always avowed since, are as follows:

1. As Christ did not scruple to say, "He that believeth on me shall never die," and that too with manifest reference of some kind to the body (see John 11: 26 and 8: 51), so the believer need not scruple to apply that language to himself. The believer may part with his flesh and blood, but shall never part with his life. His true body—that which is within his flesh and blood—is already risen from the dead by the power of Christ's resurrection, and parting with flesh and blood will be to him no death. He will pass into

the inner mansions not naked, but clothed with his immortal body.

2. The death of flesh and blood to the believer is not inevitable. It is not a "debt" which he owes to the devil, or to sin, or to the laws of nature. His debts to all these tyrants are paid. Christ has bought him out of their hands; and the question whether he shall die in the ordinary sense will be determined not by some inexorable necessity, but by the choice of Christ, and of course by the choice of himself as a member of Christ. "No man taketh my life from me," said Christ, "but I lay it down of myself." The power which he had with respect to his own life he has with respect to the lives of those who believe on him. As members of him they may lay down their lives as he did; but no man or devil takes their lives from them. Accordingly Paul balancing between the desire of life and death said: "What I shall choose I wot not."

3. It is certain from the predictions of Scripture that the time is coming when death will be abolished both as to form and substance. It is not to be expected that individuals will enter into this last victory of Christ much in advance of the whole body of believers. God is evidently preparing for a general insurrection against the "king of terrors," and we may reasonably anticipate the crisis and victory as near. "They that are alive and remain" till the promised consummation will not die in any sense, but will pass from the mortal to the immortal state by an instantaneous change, as described in 1 Cor. 15: 51.

My profession then since 1834 has been briefly this: If I pass through the form of dying, yet in fact I shall

never die. But I am not a debtor to the devil even in regard to the form of dying. No man taketh my life from me. I wot not whether I shall choose life or death. But this I know, that if I live till the kingdom of God fully comes, which I believe is coming, I shall never die in fact or in form.

The first results of the act of faith which I have described were delightful. I passed one night in unspeakable happiness. I felt that I had burst through the shroud of death into the heavenly places. But I soon found that the spiritual transition which I had made had placed me in new relations to evil spirits as well as good, that I had entered a region where the powers of darkness were to be encountered face to face as I had never encountered them before.

In the course of the following day a strange, murky spiritual atmosphere began to gather around me. Strange thoughts coursed through my brain unsuggested by my own reflections and uncontrolled by my will. I felt with shuddering that the Evil One was near. But my heart failed not. I still found refuge in God and felt that I could defy the universe of evil to injure me.

The multitude of involuntary thoughts which fermented in my mind finally settled into a strong impression that I was about to part with flesh and blood either by ordinary death or by an instantaneous change. Nor was it merely an impression that seemed to summon me away. Ere long I began actually to feel a suffocating pressure on my lungs. This was not the effect of physical disease, for my organs of respiration were healthy before and afterward. Nor was it the

effect of excitement, for I had no fear of death and was entirely calm in heart. I put my room in decent order, and lay down to die. The pressure increased till my breathing stopped, and my soul seemed to turn inward for its flight. At this crisis, when I had resigned myself wholly to the consciousness of dying, the pressure was instantly removed, and I arose with the joy of victory in my heart. To my imagination the transaction was as if I had been enclosed in a net, and dragged down to the very borders of Hades, and then in the last agony had burst the net and returned to life. This transaction was repeated several times.

After this I went through a protracted process of involuntary thought and feeling, which I can describe by no better name than a spiritual crucifixion. All the events of Christ's death were vividly pictured in my mind, and by some means realized in my feelings. I went through them not as a spectator, but as a victim. At length came the resurrection, and for a time I was released from suffering.

One physical effect of the spiritual change which had now passed upon me was loss of appetite. From this time till I left New York I took but little aliment. At times I had a special and excessive loathing of all animal food. Indeed I had a strong impression (not derived from any acquaintance with modern physiological theories) that meat-eating was a barbarism which would be abolished in the kingdom of God. But this feeling did not extend to marine food. My general rule in regard to diet was to follow the orders of instinct. The strongest stimulants such as cayenne pepper suited my appetite best, and I used them for a

time freely. I had been previously for a long time dyspeptic in my habits. But after this tanning process my stomach became a peaceable member of the corporeal community.

Sleep also was for the most part a nuisance to me. It seemed to be the condition in which the powers of darkness had most advantage of me, and I avoided it many times as I would avoid fire. Partly for this reason and partly because a spirit whose will I could not resist constrained me, I spent many nights in the streets. Oftentimes after a day of wearisome labor of mind and perhaps of body I would retire to my room, hoping for this once to enjoy a night of repose, if not of sleep. But suddenly a horror of sleep would come upon me, and a spiritual impulse would summon me with an importunity not to be denied to a night journey in the city. When weariness overcame me in these excursions, so that sleep became inevitable, I would lie down on a door-stone, or on the steps of the City Hall, or on the benches of the Battery, and forget myself for a few minutes. In this way most of my sleep for three weeks was taken.

In my night excursions I was sometimes led into the vilest parts of the city. I went alone at midnight into streets which I had been told were dangerous even in the daytime. I descended into cellars where abandoned men and women were gathered, and talked familiarly with them about their ways of life, beseeching them to believe on Christ, that they might be saved from their sins. They listened to me without abuse. One woman seemed much affected. I gave her a Bible. To another I gave a Testament. Sometimes, when I

had money, I gave that to the wretches whom I found in those dark places. These were the only dealings I had with them.

The history of my use of ardent spirits is this: During my career in legal religion I had been a zealous temperance man, and like other such zealots had regarded the use of intoxicating drinks as a sin. When I had proceeded far enough in my strange experience in New York to see that my old principles of morality, however useful they had been in the ways of ordinary life, were not competent to guide me in the new world which I had entered, I began to look about for some new system of ethics on which I might depend for security from defilement. I saw that in my circumstances, whatever might be true of others, individual free agency, which is the mainspring of legal morality, was well-nigh swallowed up in the agency of superior powers. It was evident that my only hope of safety lay in the fact that God was one of those superior powers, and that he was stronger than all the rest.

In this state of mind I felt impelled both by spiritual instinct and by principle to assert practically my liberty from the rules of my old bondage. The temperance law was only one of those rules, but it had fixed itself in my conscience more firmly perhaps than any other, and was therefore the representative of all legality. Luther said to his followers: "If anywhere anyone sets up the Sabbath on the Jewish foundation making the day holy for the mere day's sake, then I order you to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that shall reprove this encroachment on the Christian spirit of liberty." In the spirit of

this exhortation I drank ardent spirits, that I might reprove the spirit of legality which still hovered about me, and that I might practically transfer the keeping of my soul from the temperance pledge to the Spirit of God. To the charge of intoxication from the nature of the case I can only oppose my own absolute denial.

The effect of the course I pursued was such as I anticipated. It loosed me from my grave-clothes. It established me in a freedom from the petty tyranny of fashionable morality, which no pressure of public opinion has since been able to subvert. I have found, as I expected, that God is able to keep me from intemperance and all other evil without the help of pledges or the influence of human combinations.

It may not be superfluous to suggest that it would be as unwise for any one to attempt an external imitation of the course I pursued without reference to the circumstances and influences under which I acted, as it would be for one to take medicine by another's example without regard to his own condition.

After the spiritual crucifixion which has been described I received a baptism of that spirit which has since manifested itself extensively in the form of Millerism. My doctrinal views had no affinity with Miller's theory of the second advent. I knew that the first judgment took place immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, and that it was an event in the spiritual world. Yet I expected a second judgment at the end of the times of the Gentiles. The spirit which now came upon me produced an irresistible impression that this judgment was to take place immediately. It

was a terrible moment, when the red canopy above seemed just bursting for the descent of Christ with his mighty angels in flaming fire to take vengeance on the world. In that moment I thought of the millions who were unprepared for the impending scene, and involuntarily prayed that mercy might restrain judgment. Thereupon the agony of immediate expectation subsided. After several similar crises the impression wholly left me, and I received in its stead a persuasion that the judgment of the world would be a gradual spiritual operation effected by truth and invisible power without any of the physical machinery which alarms the imaginations of most expectants of the great day.

I was next driven by an invisible influence through a course of reasoning on philosophical subjects, which entirely broke up all my previous scholastic theories and reduced me to a condition of universal doubt. My mind was preternaturally active and ranged with astonishing freedom over boundless regions of thought. I imagined I saw with the clearness of heaven the falsehood of the Copernican system. The earth seemed the center of all things, and I was compelled to believe that the special dwelling-place of God instead of being above the firmament was in the opposite direction at the center of the earth. In like manner all my previous conceptions of truth in other departments of science were turned topsy-turvy, and on their ruins arose the discarded theories of the ancient world. I was spirit-bound for a time to a curious doctrine of metempsychosis. I thought that every soul was to appear in this world four times in

different persons. For instance I imagined that Adam, Abraham, and Christ were the same being, and that this being was to be manifested again in the last period of the world.

When all that the schools had laid up within me had been prostrated and reduced to chaos, I said within myself: "The Bible stands firm nevertheless." But soon the destroyer was let loose on that also. Objections to the inspiration and credibility of the Scriptures began to force themselves on my mind. With merciless and more than human ingenuity the spiritual intelligence which directed my thoughts arrayed before me all the apparent inconsistencies and immoralities of the Bible, till at last I cast it from me with abhorrence as a monstrous imposition.

I have said that Abigail Merwin was my first companion in the faith of holiness, and that the boldness of her testimony and the beauty of her behavior in the trying period of our first warfare at New Haven gained much favor for the truth. It was natural that I should regard her with peculiar confidence. She was the person to whom I was attached more than to any other on earth. From her too, as well as from all other objects of my previous confidence, I was separated by the spirit of doubt in my temptations in New York. When every other friend was gone, she was presented to me "in the visions of my head," and her character was subjected to the fearful test which had rent from me even the Bible. I saw her standing as it were on the pinnacle of the universe in the glory of an angel; but a voice from which I could not turn away pronounced her title—"Satan trans-

formed into an angel of light." I gave her up as one accursed.

Still I clung to Jesus Christ. But ere long this refuge also failed me. His character on being subjected to the diabolical spirit of analysis which had taken possession of my intellect was gradually stripped of its glory, and at length appeared preëminently hideous. With agony I yielded to the conviction that he was the prince of devils.

Finally I said in my heart: "If all science is a lie, if the Bible is an imposition, if Jesus Christ is the prince of devils, still there is a God in whom I may trust." Then the cloud of doubt began to gather about the idea of God. Satan took advantage of his own abuses, and turned my thoughts toward the impositions that had been practised upon me by what I supposed to be the spirit of God. The Bible was gone. Nothing but my own experience was left to me; and when that was set before my eyes as a series of deceptions, my belief in God was overclouded, and the darkness of atheism fell upon me.

At this point in my trials a persuasion took possession of me that I myself was Lucifer, the fallen son of the morning. I submitted to this impression with a struggling resignation to the decree which doomed me to eternal perdition. While in this state of mind I was impelled to visit Latourette. I found Harriet Livermore, the celebrated prophetess, at his house. She thrust at me with many sharp words; and both of them, curiously chiming in with the accusing sentence that was upon me, threw hints about Lucifer in my face. I answered nothing, but went home in a depth

of sorrow, below which I have never sounded before or since.

The net of Satan had completely enveloped my intellect. Yet there was an instinctive consciousness of strength and an imperishable hope in my heart. When the spirit of darkness had done its worst, I said within myself: "If the universe is a blind chaos without a God, and the destinies of all beings are to be worked out by their own strength, I have as good a right to try what I can do for existence and happiness as anybody. I will yet wrestle for victory over evil." Then my heart began to burn with indignation against the spirit which was abusing me. My will lifted itself up apparently with the energy of omnipotence against the adversary. I acted in the spirit of the words of Isaiah: "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." The net gave way, and immediately I found myself again in an atmosphere of confidence and peace.

The effect of this mental overturn was permanent. I could hardly tell afterward what I believed on any subject till I had investigated it anew. The rule of mental economy which I then adopted is this: What we positively know is all the mental capital we can count upon as safe and available. What we guess, believe, and hope to be true is paper capital, that may be genuine or not. It is well enough to have on hand a great heap of guesses, but we must not think of living on them. We should look over the whole mass of our thoughts, select out all that we absolutely know,

and keep that by itself, accounting it our specie-basis. If it is but a small store, never mind. A little silver and gold is worth more than a bushel of counterfeit bills. Then we may go on to examine and work up our heap of guesses, so as to convert them as far and as fast as possible into known truths. This is the only way to get and keep a sound mind.

I was now learning rapidly the "ways of the world" in which I found myself. The deceiver had gone too far for his own interest in arraying before me my past delusions for the sake of destroying my belief in the existence of a God. That array produced in me a more distinct conviction than I had ever had before of the existence of a devil, and of one too who could thrust himself into the place of God and imitate the influences of the Holy Ghost. I began to feel freedom in examining the credentials of invisible powers, and soon arrived at the following conclusion, which has been a valuable rule to me ever since: I am bound to believe and obey the impressions of God but not those of the devil. I have a right therefore to suspend belief till I can ascertain whether an impression comes from God or from the devil. God does not wish me to do otherwise. If any spirit attempts to hurry and drive me into belief and obedience, I may be sure that it is a spirit of darkness.

Toward the close of my time of trouble I attended a church in the city, where I heard Dr. Cox preach. His subject was the righteousness of faith, and he took occasion to speak severely and contemptuously of the views of Perfectionists. The next day, after some inward conflicts, I yielded to an impulse which directed

me to call upon him. He met me at the door. I introduced myself by remarking that I heard his discourse the day before on the subject of Perfectionism, and as I thought he labored under some misapprehension of the doctrines of Perfectionists I took the liberty to call upon him for the purpose of making explanations. He broke in upon me in a rough way with these interrogations: "Who are you? I don't know you from Adam. Have you any letter of introduction?" I told him that my name was Noyes, that I had been a student and licentiate at the New Haven Seminary, had recently become a Perfectionist and consequently had lost my license. "Well," said he, "they did right to take away your license. You ought to be silenced, and not allowed to go about disturbing the churches." "Proceed," said I, "I can bear it very well. I am accustomed to abuse." Thereupon he moderated his tone, and invited me into his sitting-room. I found there another minister, whose name I do not recollect. The Doctor introduced me to him, announcing my profession, and we all directly entered upon an animated conversation on the merits of Perfectionism. I explained and defended the views which the Doctor had condemned, and gave him some ideas on several passages of Scripture which seemed to strike him favorably. At all events he became affable and good-humored, and when I proposed to leave he entered my name in his tablets, in which he said he noted down all the new characters he met, and courteously invited me to call again.

If I have failed in any part of this outline of my New York experiences, it has been in not conveying an

adequate idea of the sufferings which I endured. It seemed to me that no human being ever drank so deeply of "the dregs of the cup of trembling." If I had foreseen from the beginning the whole course before me, I know not whether I should have had fortitude to face it. But blindfolded to the future I rejoiced at every breathing-time that I had escaped the past, and hope proved elastic enough to rise from every fall. The book of Isaiah was much in my mind; and many times its beautiful promises were applied to my spirit with healing and consoling power. Often in the darkest hour the voice of God would come to my heart, saying: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted . . . in righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee." When I finally emerged from my sufferings, I had a satisfying consciousness that my life was fire-proof. I could say, "Hell has done its worst, and yet I live."

The crisis in which my sufferings came to an end was marked by the following circumstance: My feet had become much inflamed. Indeed I could walk only with extreme difficulty and pain. I attributed this partly to my much walking, and partly to the accumulation of poisonous matter, which according to my physiological theory had been driven down from the rest of my body into my feet. In this condition I became sensible of a strong instinctive impulse to seek the salt water and bathe. I went to one of the wharves, and sat with my feet in the water about half an hour. On my return I found myself able to walk quite

comfortably, and the next day my feet were entirely well.

My spirit at the same time passed into a state of permanent peace. One of the sorest of my troubles had been anxiety about money matters. I was boarding at an expense of four dollars per week, and a bill of some twelve dollars was to be met. I had no money, and in my desolation I knew no source from which to expect any. Yet I was spirit-bound to stand still and wait on God for deliverance. At length all my old feelings of reliance on friends and carefulness about money affairs were worked out of me. I could trust God quietly and with assurance that he would not fail me. Then I became conscious that my trials were finished, and that in some way I was soon to return to New Haven.

Immediately a young man who had occasionally called upon me (being an old acquaintance from Vermont) came to my room, and after some desultory conversation observed seemingly in an incidental way that he thought of writing to my brother in New Haven. I looked sharply in his eyes and said to him: "You are trying to deceive me. You think I am crazy, and you have already written to my brother to come and take care of me." Then he confessed that he had done so, and in his wonder at my detection of him was obliged to give up his notion of my insanity. On the day following Everard Benjamin of New Haven came to my room, paid my board, and took me with him to New Haven. After reaching New Haven I learned with some surprise that Abigail Merwin went to New York with her brother-in-law, Benjamin, and returned

in the same boat with him and myself. Her reasons for keeping her presence from my knowledge I never ascertained. The circumstance however chimed in suspiciously with the spiritual impressions which I received concerning her in New York, and I began to anticipate the division which followed.

Thus closed a series of trials which, though they seemed grievous while present and left me long afterwards almost without a remnant of a reputation, nevertheless manifestly worked the peaceable fruits of righteousness, established me in the liberty of the truth, weaned me from all earthly resources, enlarged my acquaintance with the spiritual world, confirmed the strength of my intellect, and gave to my body a vigorous power of endurance which it had never possessed before and which fitted it for subsequent labors and trials. "It is a small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment" to have been either sinful, foolish, or insane in the experiences which I have related. I look back upon them not with shame or self-reproach, but with gratitude to God.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WRECKAGE

When Noyes reached New Haven on June 13th, he was received by his Perfectionist friends with much kindness, but with evident suspicions as to his sanity. Definite word that he was crazy had been sent to Putney from New York, and the family were exceedingly anxious. They wrote to Horatio, who had recently been converted to Perfectionism at New Haven, urging him to let them know the worst immediately. Horatio replied June 17th as follows:

"Dear sister Mary:

"John came here from New York last Friday. I hardly knew what to make of his long silence, but since he has been here he has satisfactorily explained it. It would take me a long time to tell you what little I know about his proceedings at New York. I shall therefore say nothing about them more than this, which I have often said: You may be sure that he has been in the Lord's hands, and that he has not been suffered to do anything which will bring reproach upon the cause of Christ. He expects now to go home next week. When he sees you, he probably will be able to satisfy all your doubts as to his sanity. Till then, be patient.

"I have been tried in this affair considerably, and

had I trusted to stories, should have believed him a downright madman. But blessed be the Lord, who has upheld both him and myself and kept our minds in peace. I hope hereafter you will lay aside all your prejudices and fears about him, and believe him still to possess his right mind, and hear what he has to say with a sincere desire to know the truth."

On the 18th Mrs. Noyes wrote thus to Horatio:

"I guess John has been no comfort to you, and that he is pretty well broken down. I hope he will come home to Mother as soon as possible. I think he must need her soothing influence. He must expect to listen to the voice of parental love and solicitude. I shall not give up my confidence in his ardent piety and filial gratitude till I see him. I hope he will not think of coming home on foot, but be here by the quickest conveyance bag and baggage. He must not think of doing ready to do all that is reasonable, and he must be reasonable. Let me know everything. I am not fearful, without assistance from his parents. His father is while I am conscious of having done my duty. Whatever John may think, I hope you, Horatio, will never allow yourself to think that you can dispense with any precept of the Bible."

About the end of June Noyes went to Putney. In a letter to Horatio dated July 2nd he says:

"My arrival at home, as you may well suppose, was a pleasant event to the family. Rumors of my fantastic performances in New York had preceded me, and Father had given up all hope of me. The rest of the family were in great suspense and tribulation, and the good people of our neighborhood had begun to avoid



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mentioning my name in their presence for fear of hurting their feelings. At first I found some difficulty in regaining the confidence even of my kindred. For a day or two some of them hid their faces from me; but at length the Lord gave me favor in their sight, and now everything is pleasantly adjusted. I went to Chesterfield the first day after my arrival and quieted Mary's fears."

Much curiosity was expressed, wherever Noyes was known, in regard to his New York experience, and many exaggerated stories were put in circulation. Noyes related his adventures without reserve. He says he was conscious of innocence and of a sound mind, and it seemed to him a trifling thing that he should be for the present an object of ridicule and pity to his acquaintances.

While Noyes was in New York the leaders of the Free Church at New Haven dismissed Boyle from his pastorship. At this Benjamin and the other Perfectionist members of the Free Church voluntarily seceded, hired a room, and commenced independent services with Boyle in charge. These proceedings, Noyes says, were premature and led to a revulsion of feeling. The pecuniary support of the revolt fell mainly upon Benjamin, who was the only substantial householder among the Perfectionists at New Haven. Boyle and his wife were quartered on him, and others frequently gathered at his table. Disputes about money matters soon began, and at length there was a violent quarrel between Benjamin and Boyle. The difficulties at this time were aggravated by reports of Noyes's insanity, and the doings of a young man

named Lowrie, who became unbalanced and undertook to imitate Noyes's behavior. The outcome of the situation is related in a letter which Noyes received from Dutton about three weeks after his arrival at Putney:

New Haven, July 18, 1834.

Dear Brother:—. . . What think you, beloved? Benjamin and wife, Abigail Merwin and her brother have apostatized, not from the faith but from a profession of it, and have gone back to the Free Church. Mrs. Benjamin says most of those who profess holiness here do not live it, and thinks she may have sinned. She and her sister both say that as the doctrine has been preached free agency has been destroyed. I asked her if it was in heaven. She could say but little, and appeared to have an arrow in her heart. I pity them sincerely. Depend upon it, Noyes, the devil is an arch counterfeiter. He will deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. . . .

When Benjamin left, the Free Church men made a desperate push to demolish the whole fabric, but they found some trees of the Lord's planting. Those on the rock feel the foundation sure amid the dash of surrounding waters and the bellowings of the storm. It has been a great blessing to Brother Boyle and wife, Smith, Dudley, Horatio, the Newberrys and the sisters generally. It throws us upon God wholly. Brother and Sister Boyle have left Benjamin, and are now without a home. They will be seen to, however.

None of us have seen Miss Merwin or her brother since they declared off, as they are out at their home. If she has gone, as I suppose she has, she has been one of the devil's best counterfeits.

I hear Brother Husted has gone, or is looking back to the flesh-pots of Egypt.

Now for the worst: Brother Lowrie has struck his colors and gone back to the Free Church. This is a hard blow truly. He got into a Jackson celebration on the Fourth of July, and celebrated the day in Jackson style, thinking he was doing God service. Now he has come to the conclusion that he sinned, and he abandons the eternal promise. Latourette, he says, is more nearly right than you, and if you had not taken the stand of never sinning again many would have come in. I have not learned that he did anything outrageous. He arose early, fired cannon, drank wine, took dinner, and went sailing. I do not think he sinned, but believe the devil made a fool of him. Poor fellow! He looks as though he had been hard pushed by the Prince of Murderers—is very thin and pale. If he has ever had the faith of Jesus, we know God will bring him forth as gold, but I do not like his present attitude.

With six apostasies you may well suppose the devil raises a shout. The Free Church men by their outbreaking joy show the tremendous pressure that has been upon them. Avery carries his head still higher and shoots out the lip. All the theological class doubtless breathe more freely.

CHAPTER XV

A NEW START

Noyes remained at Putney about a month. His family had become interested in Perfectionism as a result of letters he had written when he first came into the faith. They had also been favorably impressed by Horatio, who had recently spent a vacation at home. In a letter to Horatio dated July 2, 1834, Noyes thus describes the situation:

"Our sisters are yet unbelievers, but they have ceased to quarrel with the truth, and I think the Lord is showing them its beauty. Harriet has just returned from school. Her mind is evidently greatly exercised on the subject, and she proposes to devote this day to a solemn and earnest search for the truth. Mother believes herself delivered from sin, and rejoices in the Lord; yet I think she is in some sense a captive still. I have asked the Lord most earnestly to take the veil from before her eyes, and I believe he will soon. Father is much interested in the views of truth which I present, and makes few objections. The gospel we have received accords better with his habits of thought and practice than any of the creed-built systems; and I am by no means without hope that he will at last in his old age enter the kingdom of heaven without taking the circuitous route through Judaism."

Soon after his arrival at Putney Noyes stated his new position frankly to Mr. Foster, the Congregational minister, and to some of the members of his church. The people, however, had been warned against the infection of his ideas, and even his old friends turned away from him. Noyes felt that ultimately he must preach the new gospel publicly in the village, but for the present he thought it best to confine his efforts to his own family. He therefore attended the church services, and scrupulously avoided saying or doing things that he thought might give offense. But the church saw trouble ahead. Noyes writes:

"At a small conference meeting which I attended the chairman, Deacon Reynolds, requested me to make some remarks. I complied, but purposely avoided saying anything on the subject of perfection. I spoke of the 'exceeding sinfulness of sin' in terms not unusual in the churches. In the midst of my remarks Mr. Grout, a leading member of the church, arose and interrupted me, saying with much heat that he thought it 'very improper that Mr. Noyes should introduce his new sentiments among them, when he knew they were opposed to them.' I answered that I was not aware that the exceeding sinfulness of sin was a new doctrine in the church. Mr. Grout appealed to the chairman, and the chairman decided that I was out of order. I sat down quietly. But from that time I considered myself excommunicated. Five years after this affair Mr. Grout in a private interview voluntarily confessed to me that he did wrong in his treatment of me at the conference meeting, that it had lain on his con-

science and he had long wished to make this acknowledgment."

The only inroad Noyes made on the churches during this visit at Putney was in the case of Silas Morgan, the village blacksmith. One day when Noyes happened to be at the blacksmith's shop, Morgan, a zealous, combative Methodist, started a dispute on the subject of perfect holiness. Noyes quietly took from his pocket the little polyglot Bible, which he always carried with him, and expounded the Scripture so effectually that Morgan, completely dumbfounded, became an inquirer, and before the interview ended professed himself saved from sin. From that time he was a warm friend of Noyes and at a later period did much valuable service in arranging meetings and procuring subscribers for the forthcoming Perfectionist paper.

Confession of Religious Experience

Before we embraced Perfectionism Boyle, Dutton and I had discussed the plan of publishing a paper. We had gone beyond the standard even of the revivalists, and there was no paper published the tone of which satisfied us. When we became Perfectionists the plan was revived, and it seemed more than ever necessary. For a time the undertaking was held back by the withdrawal of the pecuniary assistance of the apostates, Benjamin and Lowrie, who were men of means; but while I was at New Haven in June we ascertained that Whitmore & Buckingham, the printers with whom I had dealt before, would print for us, and shortly after my arrival at Putney I received the following

word from Boyle: "We have closed the contract with the printers for the paper, and are hoping to be able to get out the first number by the first part of next month. You propose to remain where you are, and do whatever writing may devolve on you at your present residence. Probably it would be best for you to do so for the present, but we hope you will hold yourself ready to come on, whenever it may seem necessary in the providence of God. I wish you would write the prospectus or the introduction for the paper."

Ultimately I thought it best to return to New Haven. Starting about the end of July I stopped a few days at Hartford, where Boyle had recently preached with great effect. Here I made the acquaintance of David Harrison, who became a lifelong friend.

On resuming my journey to New Haven by stage I found myself seated by the side of a grave, elderly gentleman, who proved to be Dr. Cogswell, a clergyman. He observed, as we were starting, that he had heard there was a strange sort of people called Perfectionists in Meriden, and said: "I should like right well to see one of them." Probably I should have disclosed my own profession immediately, had I not been interrupted by a lady on the seat opposite who announced that she was from New Haven and knew all about the Perfectionists. She went on to describe them as monsters of impiety, and concluded with the following home-thrust: "As for that John Noyes, I know that he is nothing less than a blasphemer, for he said in a public meeting that he was as perfect as God, and my own sister heard him." On hearing this it struck me that it would be well to let the lady go on

without the embarrassment of knowing who I was. Accordingly I answered in a mild manner, that I thought she must be mistaken about Noyes, that I was somewhat acquainted with him, and had never heard him say anything of the kind. She insisted that her statement was true, and continued to inveigh against Perfectionism and "that John Noyes." Dr. Cogswell on learning that I was acquainted with Perfectionists engaged me in a conversation about them. He supposed that they must of course be outrageously self-righteous. I told him that they explained themselves on this point quite plausibly by saying that holiness is entirely the gift of God, no more to be credited to self than a garment given to a beggar. "Well," said he, "if that is their doctrine, I see nothing very frightful about it." In this way the doctrines of Perfectionism and my own character and proceedings were pretty thoroughly canvassed during our ride of sixteen miles. The New Haven lady occasionally broke in upon us with her hard speeches, and I noticed that a young woman, who sat beside her and, as I afterward learned, knew me, was continually laughing behind her bonnet. As we approached the city Dr. Cogswell attempted by certain conversational maneuvers to draw from me some information about myself, but I gave him no satisfaction. At length just as the coach drew up before the hotel he turned to me and said: "May I be so bold as to ask your name?" I replied: "My name is Noyes." "Ah!" said he, striking his hand on my shoulder with a hearty laugh, "you are the very preacher we have been talking about!" "Yes," said I, and casting a glance at the New Haven lady, who

seemed to be hiding herself in the corner of the coach, I got out and saw them no more.

There was at the time of which I am speaking a schoolmaster in New Haven named Amos Smith, a man of eccentric manners, much devoted to his profession, and strongly charged with the peculiar spirit which that profession sometimes generates. He loved above all things to rule boys, and thence naturally to rule every one whom he could bring into subjection. His spirit was strong, his will unspeakably obstinate, his knowledge of human nature on a small scale unusually complete. The mysterious and sometimes hideous rolling of his eyes and the strange working of his widespread fingers, his only gesture, gave an air of half-inspiration to his arguments and exhortations, which immensely increased his power over many minds.

This man had been connected with the Free Church, and was somewhat distinguished for his spirituality. When Perfectionism appeared, he manifested considerable interest in it. He did not decidedly embrace our views, nor did he directly oppose them, but he assumed a paternal or pedagogical care over them. As my will was the nearest match for his and therefore most likely to give him trouble, it was with no little satisfaction that he saw my supposed shipwreck in New York; and ever afterward he made it his business to fasten upon me like an iron manacle the charge of insanity.

While I was at Putney, Boyle and Dutton came into a state of partial dependence on this man. Boyle received much of his maintenance from him after the

defection of Benjamin, and Dutton boarded at his house and lodged in a room belonging to his schoolhouse. Smith took advantage of this situation to bring them into bondage to himself. He evaded all their demands on him for confession of holiness, and then turning upon them crowded their consciences with the demands of legality. When I arrived at New Haven, I found them well wound up in his cobwebs. The schoolmaster had nearly silenced their testimony of faith, and was dragging them back into the old working and praying system. Dutton especially was completely Smith-ridden and Boyle though less pliable was making no effectual resistance. Smith was particularly bent on preventing the publication of the paper. He insisted that we were only babes in the truth and ought not to think of publishing at present. His authority lay like an incubus on the project.

I took lodgings with Dutton, and boarded with Boyle, and soon commenced a warfare with Smith. I pressed him with the naked truth in relation to holiness, and he thrust at me the usual insinuations and accusations of legalists, always adding venom by repeating and enlarging upon the proofs of my insanity. He brought one charge against Dutton and myself, which I found exceedingly difficult to answer. He said that he had studied the mental habits of young men extensively, and plainly perceived that our minds were in a state of dissipation. Now I was distinctly conscious of intellectual habits quite different from those to which I had been bred in academic life. The tension of mind, which had been enforced by classical and legal discipline, was certainly relaxed, and judged

by pedagogical standards I could not but acknowledge that I was in some degree liable to the charge which he brought against me. On a faithful inspection, however, of my internal state I saw nothing to be censured or regretted in the course I had taken nor in the position to which I had come, and I answered him thus: "We are passing from the schools of human discipline to the school of the Spirit of truth; and as more or less anarchy always attends revolutions from arbitrary to free governments, so it is not to be wondered at that our minds in this transition period are not exactly in that orderly, mechanical state that suits a schoolmaster. It is better to move into a new house even at the cost of some temporary confusion and discomfort than to live in an old one, that cannot shelter us and is ready to fall on our heads."

My struggle with Smith was one of the severest I ever had. Day after day we wrestled as for life. I made no impression on his obstinacy; but I had the satisfaction of seeing Boyle and Dutton loose themselves from his hold. They soon stood erect again as the witnesses of holiness and liberty, and we girded ourselves for the work of publication in the face of Smith's entreaties and remonstrances.

We had some difficulty in selecting a name for the paper. Several equivocal titles were proposed by Boyle and Dutton. I insisted that our true policy was to hoist our colors boldly, and proposed the name "Perfectionist." This proposal was objected to at first, but was finally adopted unanimously.

The first number was issued on the 20th of August 1834, and thenceforward a number was published on

the 20th of each month till the spring of 1836. We commenced without a subscription list, but ultimately obtained a list of five or six hundred names. Boyle hired a house in the eastern part of the city, and I boarded with him. He was the business manager and editor-in-chief. Dutton remained in New Haven only a short time after we commenced publishing. I left at the end of six months, and Boyle then became the sole editor.

That six months was on the whole one of the most interesting seasons of my life. My heart was for the most part at peace and well supplied with heavenly food. My mind was busy with glorious and ever-expanding views of truth. The correspondence of the paper and its growing popularity and success furnished matter of constant and lively external interest. The meetings and other forms of intercourse of believers in New Haven were refreshing.

In writing for the paper I took much pleasure and found much profit. The "dissipation of mind," of which Amos Smith accused me, made it difficult for me to write in the old mechanical, sermonizing way; but I soon learned to follow instead of force the flow of my thoughts, and by waiting for what poets call the "moment of inspiration" I wrote with more satisfaction to myself than I ever did under the discipline of the schools. Boyle deputed me to write the "Introduction" for the first number, and usually chose a discourse from my pen for the leading article in each of the subsequent numbers so long as I remained in New Haven.

Boyle and I were generally agreed in our views at

this time; or rather I should say, we generally came to an agreement after some debate. As he resisted me fiercely at the beginning on the subject of holiness but afterward came over to my views, so he first fought and then embraced my testimony on several other important subjects. In the spring of 1834, while we were on a visit together at Prospect, he threatened to forsake me if I persisted in my heresy about the second coming of Christ. He said that my doctrine was like that of the Universalists, and that he had written a series of sermons some years before in opposition to it. Even at the time when the first paper was published, he stood out against me on that subject. But in the interval between the first and second numbers his mind was opened to the truth. Accordingly I prepared with his consent the article which was published on the first page of the second number entitled *The Second Coming of Christ.* In like manner he stoutly combated at first the new views which I proposed in relation to law. He had preached law so long, that it was hard for him to accept the saying of the apostle, "ye are not under the law, but under grace"; and we had a warm dispute about it just before the commencement of the paper. He soon yielded the point, however, and ultimately pushed the anti-legal doctrine a great way beyond my position and beyond what I believe to be the truth. I may say that, in my judgment, this was characteristic of his mind; first to repel the truth and then seize upon it with ultra-enthusiasm and press it to an illegitimate extreme.

On several occasions at this period he gave indications of that tendency to false fellowships which after-

wards led to his alliance with Gates, Beach, and many other haters of holiness and finally prostituted his talents to the service of causes wholly foreign to the gospel of Christ. When such men came among us by his introduction I withstood them to the face. He laughed at me for my combativeness. He has since pursued his policy, and I mine. It remains to be seen which is best in the long run.

Notwithstanding these occasional and incipient differences, on the whole we worked well together. I rejoiced much in the service which he did for the cause. Though I could not but be aware that he was in reality following me in the truth, I was very willing that he should have what his external position and his inclination conspired to give him, the name of being the leader. I knew that, if he proved true to God, he would do me no injustice and, if he proved false, "a lie would not last forever." I sincerely loved him and gloried in his growing influence.

It was toward the end of this period that Edwin Stillman, a Baptist theological student at New Haven, embraced the doctrine of holiness. The manner of his conversion was this: He had talked with Lovett, and had invited him to call with me on a certain day. I went with Lovett, and found at Stillman's room two Baptist clergymen, one the pastor of a church in New Haven and the other a prominent theologian from another part of Connecticut. The latter engaged me in a dispute about holiness, which soon became warm. He was arrogant and insulting. At length I told him in the plainest terms that he was full of priestcraft, that he could not speak the truth, that he was a "solid

lie." He was so wroth, as he afterward confessed, that he was tempted to strike me. He and his brother minister soon went away. I was a little apprehensive that Stillman would stumble at my rough treatment of the minister. But on conversing with him it was immediately apparent that the contrary effect had been produced. He saw where the "bad spirit" was. The scene had fully ripened him for a surrender to the truth. After a little conversation he knelt down with us and with tears in his eyes gave himself up to a full reconciliation with God.

The Perfectionist paper gave a great impetus to the cause of salvation from sin. Its influence was by no means measured by its nominal subscription list. It was read in grocery-stores and post-offices and wherever men and women assembled; and though it was quite generally tabooed by the ministers, it found its way into the homes of many of the *élite* among the church members. Fourteen years later when the Community gathered at Oneida, it was astonishing how many of the members had been brought into the faith either directly or indirectly by the paper published at New Haven. Thus in a short time the loss due to the defection of the converts from the Free Church was much more than made up.

CHAPTER XVI

RUPTURE OF FAMILY TIES

Noyes to His Father

New Haven, October 8, 1834.

Dear Father:—I have received by Horatio your advice that I leave New Haven, if I am not getting a living. I think it evidently is the will of God, as it is my desire, that I should remain here for the present. Here I have employment in various ways, which I could not immediately have elsewhere. New Haven has become in some sort the center of business in the spiritual and intellectual world. We receive many visits from persons residing at a distance, who desire to understand the gospel, and opportunities are continually presenting themselves of circulating far and wide the knowledge of Christ. The correspondence which is flowing in upon us in consequence of the paper is by no means small and will unquestionably increase. The monthly preparation of the paper is no great task, yet I am much interested in the work, and wish to devote my immediate personal attention to sustaining its interest so long as the Lord shall permit its publication. Also I find it profitable to visit occasonally the several companies of believers which have been established at Prospect, Meriden, and other

places in this vicinity. On the whole, though report will have it that I have been "returned to my friends in a state of utter derangement," it has not seemed to me expedient to endorse that report by abandoning my post, though that post be "where Satan's seat is."

As to getting my living the case stands thus: Money is sometimes offered me by those who love the truth, but I say to them: "I have no occasion for it at present. My father has supplied me. Give it to Brother Boyle or Dutton, who need it more." I should unquestionably be supported as they are, if it were understood that I desired it. As it is I have received a little money and many offers of a home at Prospect and Meriden, which I should accept if constrained to leave this city. Room rent and furniture have cost me nothing thus far and probably will not during the winter. My expense for boarding with Mr. Boyle will be as small as the case will allow, probably about $2.00 per week.

It is now two years since I have had any claim upon you for support on the ground of relationship. What you have given I have received as a gratuity with thankfulness both to you and to my Father in heaven. If you are not interested in the object for which I live, I cannot ask or expect you to assist me. That object is that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven. If the object is a good one and you consider me a person fitted to further it, you will not account money bestowed upon me as thrown away. It will not perhaps yield a profit so immediate and tangible as that of bank stock, but it will help the

building of that kingdom in which you hope to dwell forever, and into which the kings of the earth shall bring their glory. . . .

Your son, J. H. Noyes.

Noyes to His Mother

New Haven, Nov. 2, 1834.

Dear Mother:— . . . As to going home, though I would rejoice to see you and for my own personal comfort would be glad to remain with you, yet many reasons forbid it for the present. Besides, if Father fears to involve himself in my doings, the same objection will lie against my living upon him at home as abroad; for you may be sure I shall never rest till the righteousness of God shall go forth as brightness and his salvation as a lamp that burneth. You must hedge up Jesus Christ, if you check me. May the Lord give you all grace to say, Amen.

Yours affectionately, J. H. Noyes.

Noyes to His Sister Elizabeth

New Haven, Nov. 12, 1834.

Dear sister Elizabeth:—I exceedingly marvel at your letter, as I have for a long time at the course which Mother and some others of my kindred have pursued in relation to me. Let me ask now kindly and frankly and once for all, Am I a boy or a man? Am I sane or crazy? Am I a wretch or a servant of God? If you think me a boy, or crazy, or a reckless apostate, I commend your course, and only ask you to use care in forming your opinion of me. After that,

use persuasion or force to bring me home or consign me to a hospital. But if you think me a man of common sense and a servant of God, I pray you believe by the help of God that I can best manage my own matters, and let your hearts have peace. I perceive with pleasure and gratitude that my father is exempt from the charge implied in what I have said. He bids me act according to the wisdom given me and, if he gives me nothing more than this liberal advice, I shall be more disposed to thank him than others who offer different assistance and withal claim the right to dispose of my free agency.

Think you I would not rejoice to go home and spend my days with you in peace, if God would show me the way? Or think you that all the solicitations of all my friends on earth and all the malice of men and devils in hell will induce me to go home while the Lord does not show me the way? I verily think you are as anxious about me as if there were no God, whose wisdom and love is engaged for your welfare and mine. I ask Mother and all who sympathize with her in her solicitude to inquire carefully before God whether such solicitude is not selfishness. You write of being in a state of painful "suspense" about me. And wherefore in suspense? I can but judge from some expressions of your letter as well as from some experimental knowledge of human nature in general, that you are painfully suspending your judgment of my character and of the truth for which I suffer on the question whether Perfectionism will prevail and be a popular cause. If this be so, if you are waiting for results and not looking at truth, nothing but sor-

row is before you so far as this subject is concerned. Your principle is manifestly a wrong one and cannot bring forth good fruit. You ask Horatio to let you know "the worst," as if some shameful or disastrous disclosure of things behind the veil might be made. I can only trust the Lord to disabuse you of your suspicions, while I declare that the relation in which I stand to my friends at home has given me more trouble than anything else. It has long been my endeavor to avoid an explicit declaration of independence both for your sakes and for mine. At the same time in my last two letters, as often heretofore, I have given you such a statement of my case as I hoped would satisfy you that I can receive no assistance which shall entitle any one but Jesus Christ to mark the pathway for my feet. Yet you insist upon my coming home, and counsel me about getting a livelihood, as if dependence was the condition of your favors. (I speak only of my mother and sisters.) Let me say now for your special notice, that family considerations have become with me subordinate to my relations to God and, if there is any conflict between them, the first will be sacrificed without faltering. I say to you as to all others, I am the Lord's freeman and, if you show me favor, let your motive be not parental or family affection but the love of God and the truth. At any rate tempt me not to act from unworthy motives. Read for my sake Matt. 10: 37, Mark 3: 31-35.

As to want of money, while God withholds it I want it not. Yet my present situation, as stated in my last letter, is one which I should once have counted

necessitous. Fifty dollars would increase my external comfort. Whenever it is absolutely necessary, I shall have it. Laugh at my faith, if you will, but I know that "no good thing will the Lord withhold from them that walk uprightly." The Lord has yet thrown before me no motives for leaving this city. Though I am here in a state of dependence on those who are not my kindred according to the flesh, I am well content, for they give me thanks and love with their money and sustenance. If you dislike the idea of my dependence upon others, I ask, Where will my dependence be more servile, here or at home? Here I am writing for the press and preaching. At home, as you well know, I could do comparatively nothing. And am I less in a state of dependence on others at home than abroad? If you think duty forbids you to succor me here, I pray you be not concerned about my livelihood. Give me up, Mother! For the Lord's sake give me up! You must either learn the Amen or I cannot walk with you. Moreover I desire, if you do not receive the truth as I do, if you cannot testify that Jesus Christ, he who saves his people from their sins, is in you of a truth, you may frankly say so. I have long lamented the case of many, who in part believe and advocate the truth and yet have not the living witness within.

You will all think this a strange and perhaps a perverse letter. Receive it as it is written in the exercise of that charity "which thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." I was very sorrowful last night while remembering Mother's

grievous cares and sickness, and prayed that she might know the fullness of him "who is our peace." I know full well, if this letter does not cure her, it will trouble her. I commit the result to the Lord.

Write me all your mind soon.

Your brother, J. H. Noyes.

Noyes to His Mother

New Haven, Dec. 2, 1834.

Dear Mother:—I see by your letter to Horatio you have not quite given me up yet. Therefore I will counsel you again to follow the footsteps of Abraham, the father of believers. Faith is the same now as it was in Abraham's day in respect to its nature. The God of Abraham will not shrink from rending asunder every earthly relation. If he bids me leave my kindred and go out not knowing whither, I am content. May he teach you in everything to give thanks.

By my last letter you understand my circumstances and purposes. The course I have chosen diverges widely from my father's plans and, as I am assured the Lord will never require or suffer me to change that course, we may as well now as ever part in peace. I have paid Horatio a part of the money I borrowed of him, and shall soon pay the remainder and borrow no more. I now owe but a few dollars in this city or elsewhere and, the Lord prospering my plans, I shall be free next week. Thereafter, unless some other way is opened, I shall leave this city and cast myself on the providence of God for employment and support. Brother Boyle, not "having abjured the faith" but holding it unwaveringly in the midst of calumny and

embarrassment, will remain the editor of the paper. Instead of my supporting him he has rather supported me, and still says, while he has a shelter and a table I shall not want. But we have all been sometimes straitened. Our brethren are not very numerous or wealthy in this region and I choose to relieve them, if possible, of their charges respecting me.

As you desired to know my plans, I have told you all I know at present. Perhaps before tomorrow everything will be changed. I live by no sure rule of calculation except the faithfulness of God. Therefore, if you would have peace so far as I am concerned, you must make no calculation other than that. . . .

Your son,

J. H. Noyes.

CHAPTER XVII

SECURITY AND FREEDOM FROM LAW

It will be remembered that Noyes in his original approach to the doctrine of salvation from sin made use of an historical argument. In the early numbers of *The Perfectionist* he reached the same conclusion by bringing into view the distinction between the so-called "old" and "new" covenants as described in the Bible, and in elucidating the subject from this angle he deduced two principles, security and freedom from law, which, vaguely apprehended at first but now clearly defined and incorporated in the conception of salvation from sin, had a marked influence on the course of events during the next three years.

The idea of security undoubtedly fitted in better with Noyes's temperament than the Wesleyan doctrine of the possibility of a "fall from grace." The same tendency, which we have observed, to do nothing by halves, to follow up every principle to its logical ultimate conclusion, led him first to seek entire freedom from sin instead of partial freedom, and then to believe that salvation from sin once attained was forever secure. Accordingly we find the germ of the doctrine of security expressed in his first written description of his experience as a Perfectionist. In his letter to his mother dated February 24, 1834, he

declares himself not only free from all present sin but also in possession of "full assurance of everlasting glory."

Although Noyes was aware that the Wesleyans generally rejected the doctrine of security, he was at first under the impression that the New York Perfectionists believed as he did on this important question. He found, however, during his sojourn in New York in May 1834 that this was not the case. On that occasion he discussed the doctrine of security with Latourette, the leader of the New York Perfectionists, and was violently repulsed by him on account of it. A little later at New Haven he had an interview with John B. Foot, one of the leaders of the Albany Perfectionists, and Chauncey Dutton, whose sister was a member of the Albany group and whose conversion to Perfectionism had recently been brought about by Foot. In this interview for the first time the doctrine of security came up for discussion between him and the Albany Perfectionists. Foot immediately rejected the doctrine, not indeed so violently as Latourette had done, but decisively. Dutton on the other hand promptly embraced it, saying to Foot: "This is just what I have wanted from the beginning. Why did you not teach this?" Foot and Dutton then declared that all the New York Perfectionists were followers of Wesley on the question of security, and this statement was confirmed six months later, when the doctrine was fiercely denounced by the New York Perfectionists in their convention at Canastota.

The doctrine of security, however, was adopted by Boyle as well as Dutton, and soon became the accepted

view among the New Haven Perfectionists. In August 1834 it was written by Noyes into the Introduction to the Perfectionist paper in the following explicit terms:

We find in the Bible as well as in the nature of the case three modifications of perfect holiness: perfection in present obedience, perfection in security of obedience, and perfection in experience or suffering. . . .

1. The holiness of Adam and of the angels that left their first estate was perfect considered simply as present obedience to the law, but destitute of prospective security, as was proved by their apostasy.

2. The holiness of Christ was perfect both as present obedience to law and as prospectively secure. Yet in another sense it was imperfect during his life on earth, for "though he were a Son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him"; "for it became him . . . in bringing many sons unto glory to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." So Paul, while counting all things but loss that he might overcome death by knowing the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, denied that he had already attained the victory or was already perfect; and yet in the next breath falling back upon an inferior meaning of the word he could say: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

3. The present holiness of Christ on the throne of his glory and of those, who having overcome by his blood have attained that likeness of his resurrection

toward which Paul was urging his way, is perfected in the highest sense; it is perfect in present obedience, perfect in security, perfect in victory over suffering.

Perfectionists, if they may be allowed to designate the place which they hold on the scale of perfection, universally claim to stand with Paul on the middle ground between the perfection of Adam and of Christ —saved from sin, eternally saved, yet "saved by hope," waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies.

Finally in *The Perfectionist* for December 20, 1834, Noyes thus defended the doctrine of security:

The new covenant secures salvation from sin forever. Salvation from sin in the proper signification of the expression is salvation from sin forever. Whatever interrupts everlasting holiness surely is sin, and he that ever falls into sin can scarcely be said to have been saved from sin. Certainly he was not saved from the worst of all sins, apostasy. We observe therefore on this point that the contrast instituted between the old covenant and the new decisively shows that the latter secures salvation from sin forever. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." It is plain that the deficiency of the old covenant was the fact that one party continued not in it, which deficiency by the terms of

the contrast was not to exist in the new one. "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Under the first covenant he declared only, "I will be to them a God, if they will be to me a people." They sinned against him and the covenant became unprofitable. Under the second covenant he engages for the faithfulness of both parties. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people"; for "I will write my laws on their hearts."

The other principle, which was at this time incorporated in Noyes's conception of salvation from sin, was that of freedom from law. In the earlier letters describing his new experience Noyes scarcely mentioned the law, but for a time he instinctively avoided the self-condemnation which his former attitude toward the law would have brought upon him. During his strange experience in New York City in May 1834 he suddenly found himself in a desperate battle with legality. He began to see that the law, if allowed its former authority, was an intolerable burden; worse yet, it interfered with sympathetic relations between man and God, and thus undermined the very citadel of justification. By a struggle which cost him not only severe suffering but nearly all his friends, he won the victory over legality in his own heart. When he returned to New Haven a few months later, he found that Boyle and Dutton under the influence of the legalist, Amos Smith, had already lost their sense

of justification and were on the point of abandoning their claim of salvation from sin. Noyes girded himself again for a battle with legality, and at last succeeded in releasing his comrades from their captivity. Notwithstanding these partial victories, during the entire period while he was connected with *The Perfectionist* at New Haven the standard of salvation from sin was constantly endangered by the machinations and attacks of legalists. Under these circumstances Noyes was compelled to study intently the relation of the law to the gospel of salvation from sin. The starting-point of his investigation was the assertion of Paul, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." From this and the whole tenor of the New Testament on the subject he argued that union with Christ gave complete freedom from law. His conclusions were published in two articles in *The Perfectionist,* which can only be summarized here:

"The Perfectionist" November 20, 1834

Righteousness can only be wrought in one of two ways: either by independent obedience to an external precept, or by yielding the powers to the energy and direction of God by faith in Christ. Before Christ came, by whom the righteousness of faith was revealed, legality was not, neither could it be, necessarily evil. On the contrary the preceptive law was an institution of God, and the righteousness which it wrought was encouraged and regarded by him. The law stands in the same relation to the gospel as John the Baptist to Christ. So far as legalists adopt the confession of John the Baptist, "He must increase, but I must de-

crease," "There cometh after me one, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose," all is right. But when the law stands side by side with the gospel, when John the Baptist commences competition with Christ, then all is wrong.

"The Perfectionist" November 20, 1834

The new covenant gives liberty from external law. This is implied in the contrast presented between the old and the new dispensation. The new covenant is "not according to the covenant" made with the house of Israel by the mediation of Moses. Under the old covenant the law was written on tables of stone. Under the new it is written in the heart. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." External law of necessity supposes internal depravity. A law that men shall eat or sleep would be ridiculous, simply because all men are sufficiently disposed to eat and sleep. If men were sufficiently disposed to love God with the whole heart, a law requiring them to do so would be equally ridiculous. This disposition God promises by the new covenant to secure; and his promise abolishes his statute. Under the old covenant God said: "Do according to all I command you, and ye shall live." Under the new covenant, where its powers are fully developed, he may safely say: "Do as you please; for I promise that your pleasure shall be mine. I will write my law upon your hearts."

Noyes believed that these two doctrines, security and freedom from law, presented the central idea of

the gospel of Christ, namely, salvation from sin by the power of God without the law. But he found that they were exceedingly liable to be misconceived and perverted, and he later restated them with a view to bringing out more clearly their limitations and safeguards.

CHAPTER XVIII

NEW YORK PERFECTIONISM

"New York Perfectionism and New Haven Perfectionism," wrote Noyes, "may be regarded as twin products of the great religious revival which stirred the heart of the American nation in the fore part of the nineteenth century. New York Perfectionism was the elder by a few months, and like Esau was wild and barbaric; while New Haven Perfectionism like Jacob was more intellectual and civilized. These two schools of Perfectionists in their earlier years alternately fraternized and fought; and at last amalgamated in the Oneida Community."

As we have seen in a former chapter, the first person in this country who preached and professed salvation from sin was James Latourette. In about the year 1828 he broke away from established religious ideas, and became the leader of a considerable congregation in New York City. "His system," says Noyes, "was little more than Methodism of the most sublimated and noisy sort, his ruling passion being not for holiness but for signs and wonders and mighty deeds by prayer." Nevertheless he and his followers were called "Perfectionists," and on account of their singular manners and beliefs attained a good deal of notoriety. Latourette's immediate converts were

drawn chiefly from the vicinity of New York City and Newark, which thus became the primary distributing center in America of Wesleyan or, as it afterward came to be called, New York Perfectionism.

From New York City in about 1831 a colony of Perfectionists established itself at Albany, New York, under the leadership of John B. Foot and two sisters by the name of Annesley. This Albany group proved to be exceedingly virile, and became even more important as a distributing center than its parent colony. During 1832 and 1833 its missionaries went in every direction, and numerous Perfectionist colonies sprang up, the most notable being those at Westfield, Southampton, and Brimfield in Massachusetts, and at Delphi in Central New York. Nor must it be forgotten that letters written to Chauncey Dutton by his sister Eliza, a member of the Albany group, were among the agencies that converted Noyes to Perfectionism at New Haven.

In the counties of central New York, which had been "burnt over" by the Finney revivals, Perfectionism found a soil exactly adapted to its needs, and here at Delphi was developed a third distributing center. Hiram Sheldon began the movement in the spring of 1833, and his followers, traveling two and two like the disciples of Christ, made converts wherever they went. Most prominent among these were Martin P. Sweet and Jarvis Rider of Deruyter, Erasmus Stone of Salina,* and David A. Warren of Verona. Within a year Perfectionist congregations

* The name of this town was later changed to "Syracuse." —G. W. N.

could be found in a score of towns; and in July 1834 a correspondent of *The Religious Intelligencer* writing from Cortland County says: "These people I understand are already quite numerous, and are increasing. Several of those whom I heard evidently possess some little talent, and are remarkably fluent in quoting Scripture. They threaten us with an alarming progress of their heresy."

A further impetus to the spread of Perfectionism in this region was given in August 1834 when *The Perfectionist* began to be published at New Haven. As an illustration of this David A. Warren writes September 7th:

"A copy of the first number of *The Perfectionist* was sent to the Oneida Institute in Utica, at which place there is a great anxiety manifested with regard to this subject. The paper, to use the expression of my informant, went through the Institute like lightning. They are very anxious to see me and hear me preach."

Toward the end of the summer of 1834 Charles H. Weld, whose father lived at Quality Hill, near Oneida, New York, spent several weeks in that vicinity. Writing from there September 9, 1834, he says:

"I have been unobtrusively visiting several places in Oneida and Madison Counties, calling upon perfection brethren and others—ministers and leading members of the churches. The Lord has blessed me exceedingly, has prepared the way before me, and has enabled me, I believe, to benefit very much many of the brethren, who were 'seeing men as trees walking' and in consequence of intellectual mistakes were almost

entirely closing the minds of the church and the world against them; while on the other hand he has enabled me to present the truth to very many who have not as yet embraced it practically; while he has, I am persuaded, himself fastened it as a nail in a sure place in many minds. There is a wonderful preparation for sowing the seed extensively in this region."

Illustrations of the spirit and methods of the New York Perfectionist leaders and the preparedness of mind for their work may be seen in the following extracts from the correspondence of the period:

C. E. Dutton to J. Boyle, Dec. 1834: I have been west to Cortland County. All Babylon is in commotion there. I preached Christ in much contention at times. The church in G—— is broken in fragments. All the spiritual part have come into the faith of Jesus. Their pastor raves like a devil in chains. Ten men were excommunicated from his church while I was there, and he has much more work on hand.

Our "new measure" ministers are more concerned about keeping what they have got than promoting revivals to get more. I preached a few weeks since at C——. The Lord has a few chosen there and although the ministers rage, yet the Lord wrings from the laymen the testimony that these things are true. A deacon of Dr. Y——'s church was at the meeting. He had been the man that Babylon had looked to in the time of her distress to fight her tormentors, the Perfectionists. He was an able man, and in his frequent contests with the heretics had learned to steer close by the wind, to avoid being raked. He would testify, when pressed, that he was free from condemnation.

He followed me home from the meeting, as he afterwards said, to give me battle. The Lord gave me wisdom and power, and for the first time he was stripped naked and perfectly confounded. He sat an hour or two with his face in his hands, struggling with pride, and then attempted to leave, it being past midnight, but dared not. He finally said: "I take the Christ and suffer the consequences." He found the well of life. It was a proud triumph of the living God, and Babylon felt the blow at her remotest border.

The devil is making his greatest effort in this quarter, in pushing his saints to testify to holiness under the law. L—— M—— stands at the head of the line, and he and his followers are doing the devil an important service. The Lord is doing a great work by the paper, both in strengthening the saints and in confounding Babylonians.

David A. Warren at Verona, New York, to J. Boyle, March 29, 1835. [Having described his examination by the Association of ministers which had licensed him to preach, Warren continues]: "After the examination had closed, the motion was made and seconded to depose Brother Warren. The first delegate called upon, who was reputed to be as pious as any among them, rose and said, he should not vote; he saw more of the spirit and temper of Christ in that man than he saw in himself; he thought the Bible warranted him in the ground he took, and he was prepared to go almost all the way with him himself. The next one called upon declined voting for the same reasons. The Moderator seeing this course would not do remarked:

"We all believe Brother Warren to be a blessed man and a Christian; and that the error is in his head and not in his heart. But he has departed from our faith and we must put our hands on these errors." They finally concluded to sustain the motion solely on the ground that I had departed from their faith, and not to jeopardize my Christian character in the least.

M. P. Sweet at Genoa, New York, to J. Boyle, July 1835: I arrived in this town yesterday, and have had sweet communion with some of the dear children of God who reside here. . . . I am greatly rejoiced at the progress of the work of the Lord. A spirit of inquiry is abroad in the land. . . . I have been recently in Owasco and the adjoining towns preaching Christ a savior from sin. Multitudes attend, many hear and assent to the truth, while some few live it. I attended a meeting of the holy brethren in Owasco. It was held in an orchard. An immense concourse of people were present—one to two thousand persons from fifteen and twenty miles about. Yet in so great a crowd there was scarcely an act to interrupt the order of the meeting, and an almost breathless attention was given to the word of life. I am about to leave here for Newark, Wayne County.

John Smith at Genoa, New York, to J. Boyle, July 1835: Your letter came to my family during my absence on a visit to the saints in Deruyter, Delphi, Cazenovia, Smithfield, Augusta, Verona, Chittenango, Canastota, Manlius, Salina, etc. Brothers Mead and Randall accompanied me. It was the most delightful visit I ever made. To see the family likeness and the teachings of the same blessed Jesus, though under great

variety of external circumstances, impressed on my mind the truth that God is bringing about a unity, which old Babylon with all her efforts, treasures, human learning, eloquence could not even imitate. At Canastota on the first day of the week, being sent for, Brothers Randall, Mead, Hatch and myself held a "preach" upon one of the canal bridges to a full congregation. I need not tell you that God was there in ten thousand of his glorified saints to execute judgment upon the ungodly. The saints got the victory through the blood of the Lamb, and Satan's kingdom shook. An old Babylonian priest got mad, and said we ought to be put in jail every one of us. He shook his cane over Brother Randall's head, and said he would strike him, were it not that he was not in a habit of so doing.

When the New York and New Haven schools of Perfectionists first met, in the interview between Latourette and Noyes that has been described, antagonism flashed forth and it seemed as if reconciliation would be impossible. Nevertheless, when the New Haven leaders started *The Perfectionist,* the New York brethren quite generally approved and gave their support. Latourette himself subscribed for ten copies of the paper, and all the prominent colonies of Perfectionists in New York and Massachusetts gladly received and circulated it. But as the New Haven Perfectionists proceeded in the development of their characteristic doctrines—the second coming, security, freedom from law, aversion to asceticism—the New York Perfectionists were again roused to opposition.

Reports came to New Haven of the dissatisfaction of Sheldon, Foot and the Annesleys with the "carnal theorizing" and "worldly wisdom" of *The Perfectionist*. Presently Latourette canceled his whole subscription, and called the paper "The Delusionist." At length in a general convention of the New York Perfectionists held at Canastota, New York, January 1, 1835, the doctrines of the New Haven school were fiercely denounced. Dutton, who attended, returned to New Haven with the report that both he and the paper had been "ridden over rough-shod."

But not even the denunciations and disclaimers of the Canastota Convention were able to break completely the affiliations between the two sorts of Perfectionists. The next step was an attempt on the part of the New York Perfectionists to convert the New Haven brethren from their obnoxious ideas. Simon Lovett, a prominent member of the New York group, came to New Haven in January 1835 to set Noyes right. He immediately entered into a discussion of the disputed points, but instead of converting Noyes to his views, it was not long before he himself was converted to the views of Noyes; and he became forthwith a forward champion of the very doctrines he had come to combat.

After the failure of the New York Perfectionists' mission to Noyes, Lovett led Noyes back on a mission to the New York Perfectionists. The believers who lived in Southampton and Brimfield, Massachusetts, had originally received the faith from the Misses Annesley of Albany, New York. They had, however, responded with more than usual intelligence and enthu-

siasm to the New Haven paper, and seemed to offer a favorable point of junction between the New York and New Haven schools. Lovett, who had formerly been their pastor, was well acquainted with them, and was anxious that Noyes should preach his new doctrines among them in person. This mission, as will be seen in the next chapter, also proved abortive; and for two and a half years thereafter the relations between New York and New Haven Perfectionists remained quiescent. At the end of that time events occurred which gradually brought about a lasting union.

CHAPTER XIX

ANTINOMIANISM

Freedom from sin according to Noyes's definition had two essential components, right intent and intelligence. Since these internal monitors might conflict with external law, freedom from sin without freedom from external law was a contradiction in terms. Hence Noyes and his followers, though brought up in the strictest school of New England morality, declared themselves "free from law." But here a new danger appeared. In escaping from law many of the Perfectionists, like the mediaeval mystics, fell into antinomianism. Antinomianism is the assumption of freedom from the external law of spoken or written statutes while not yet under the internal law of the heart and mind. It takes different forms according to the temperamental susceptibilities of its subjects. In those inclined to sensuality it takes the form of lasciviousness; in those whose leading trait is self-esteem the form of anti-organization; in those of an indolent disposition the form of passivism. During the prevalence of the antinomian aberration in 1835-6 it seemed as though the cause of salvation from sin would be completely given over to anarchy and imbecility. But the Perfectionists, unlike the mediaeval

mystics, did not abandon the principle of freedom from law. "The Reformers," said Noyes, "swam out a little way into the stream of spiritual experience, and finding it full of serpents and crocodiles swam back as fast as they could. I swam out and encountered these monsters, but I killed them with my bowie-knife and came out on the other side." The Perfectionists were brought gradually to the conviction that even the spiritually-minded in the present stage of human development needed to be restrained by moral forces which, though consistent with personal freedom, were nevertheless in effect equivalent to law. Such forces they found in voluntary subjection to leadership and to mutual instruction. Thus they held on their course and, as we shall see in Chapter XXXVII, were ultimately able to run the line between salvation from sin and legality on the one side, salvation from sin and antinomianism on the other.

Lasciviousness

Noyes in his narrative of religious experience continues:

About the first of February 1835 Lovett and I set our faces toward Massachusetts. At Southampton I was well received. All hearts were open. The drift of my operations was to clear the field of legality, and introduce the doctrines of security and the second coming. The Annesleys had connected with the doctrine of holiness that sort of Methodist legality, of which Latourette set the pattern. Praying and "pumping" for spiritual life was the order of the day. The following anecdote may serve as an illustration of the

course I pursued: At a social meeting in a private house it was proposed that we should "pray all round." Accordingly all knelt before their chairs, and entered upon a series of good old "new measure" petitions. My place was near the end of the series. When my turn came to pray, my words were as follows: "O Lord, we thank thee that thou hast given us all that we need, and we don't want anything more. Amen." Thereupon the whole circle burst into a laugh, and arose from their knees. That was the end of formal praying among Perfectionists at Southampton.

After a week or two Lovett and I went to Brimfield. I found the Perfectionists there prejudiced against important teachings of the New Haven school, and I preached what I believed among them with much zeal and some contention. Their leader, Tertius Strong, succumbed to my reasonings, and soon the doctrines of the second coming and what we called the "eternal promise" were received on all sides with great enthusiasm. I left them in the midst of this enthusiasm, and went on my way to Vermont. Lovett remained at Brimfield, and from him and others I afterward learned the following facts:

Two days after I left, C. E. Dutton arrived from Albany. The excitement increased. Finally it assumed a social and fanatical form. Mary Lincoln and Maria Brown, the leaders among the girls, made their way at midnight to Simon Lovett's room. The purpose of this visit, so far as understood, was by no means carnal. On the contrary it was intended as a crowning demonstration of the spirit triumphing over the flesh; but, as usually happens in such presumpt-

uous experiments, in the end the flesh triumphed over the spirit. The scandal was overwhelming. Under its pitiless blast Mary Lincoln imagined that God was about to destroy Brimfield with fire from heaven, and she warned all true-hearted believers to flee with her to the mountains. Some tried to hold her back, but one young woman, Flavilla Howard by name, decided to accompany her. They set forth at nightfall, and tramped through mud and rain to the top of a neighboring mountain, throwing off their clothing as they ran. There they prayed that the avenging bolts might be stayed; and as a result of their intercession, they afterward said, the city was saved.

I was so near being actually present at this affair, and so liable to be thought responsible for it and implicated in it, that I must now tell more particularly how and why I left Brimfield. From my first contact with the Massachusetts clique of Perfectionists at Southampton I had been aware of a seducing tendency to freedom of manners between the sexes. The expressions "brother," "sister," "beloved," "dearly beloved" were in common use. One young woman kissed Simon Lovett the first time she ever saw him. At Brimfield there was a group of handsome, brilliant young women, and manners were equally free. By my position as preacher of the doctrines which had taken all by storm I was the object of attentions, which were seemingly innocent but which I soon began to suspect as dangerous. Finally one evening at a social gathering around William Tarbell's fire his daughter, Hannah, in the midst of the general cheerfulness seemed downcast. I asked her what made her

sad. She replied that she imagined I had no confidence in her. Thereupon I took a seat beside her and put my arm around her. As we separated she kissed me in token of recovery from her distrust. That night, while on my bed in prayer, I got a clear view of the situation, and I received what I believed to be "orders" to withdraw. I left the next morning alone, without making known my intention to any one, and took a bee-line on foot through snow and cold—below zero —to Putney, sixty miles distant, which I reached within twenty-four hours.

I confess that I sympathized to some extent with the spirit of the first letters that came to me about this affair, and sought to shelter rather than to condemn the young women who appealed to me against the storm of scandal which they had brought upon themselves. But in the sequel, as the irregularities continued and passed on into actual licentiousness and finally into propagandism, I renounced all sympathy with them, and did my best in subsequent years to stamp them out by word and deed.

The "bundling" at Brimfield began during the first week of March 1835. Ten days later Dutton and Lovett left for Southampton, where they lodged with Dr. Gridley, a leading man among the Perfectionists there. Shortly afterward they were joined by Mary Lincoln. One of the first to advance into the new freedom was the wife of Dr. Gridley. The Doctor, we are told, remained "waiting on the Lord without opposing," though as yet unconvinced.

During this visit Mary Lincoln decided that Dutton

was her special affinity. She talked openly about being his, as though he had no voice in the matter. Dutton felt that possibly God had chosen for him. So they were married.

From Southampton Dutton went into New York State, while Lovett made a circuit of towns in Massachusetts. On his return to Southampton Lovett was joined by Maria Brown and Hannah Tarbell of Brimfield. Mrs. Gridley's brother, a young man by the name of Searl, now came into the "gospel liberty," as they called it. Dr. Gridley, too, having put aside all scruples, boldly espoused the movement, and for a number of years his house was the scene of scandalous practices, in which he took a leading part.

Not long after this Dr. Gridley and Mr. Searl set out to visit Brimfield. While on the road they were assailed by a mob of young men on horseback, among whom was a brother of Mary Lincoln. They were beaten with clubs, and Mr. Searl had holes cut through his overcoat and coat. With violent threats the men rode away.

The social excitement, which had started at Brimfield, was communicated next to New Haven. Lovett and Dutton mingled with the Perfectionists there, and a run of spiritual mating followed. Lovett himself claimed Abby Fowler of New Haven as his spiritual mate, and married her. After her death he married Abby Brown of Brimfield under a similar claim.

Meanwhile the gospel of irresponsible freedom was being communicated by letters to Perfectionists in more distant parts. Tertius Strong of Brimfield corresponded with Jesse and Rhoda Mudgett of Cam-

bridge, Vermont. Letters giving a detailed account of the Brimfield proceedings were sent to Jonathan Burt and other Perfectionists in the State of New York. The effect of these revelations upon New York Perfectionists was greatly increased by a vision which Erasmus Stone of Salina was reported to have seen. He saw in his dream men and women flying in all directions and crossing each other's track, each apparently in earnest search. His interpretation was, that in the present state husbands and wives were wrongly paired, and that in the coming dispensation they would be separated and would find their true affinities.

At Delphi in Central New York Lucina Umphreville, a fascinating young Perfectionist, had been teaching that carnal union was not to be tolerated even in marriage, while spiritual union whether in or out of the marriage relation represented a high state of attainment. Consequently the news from Brimfield and the report of Erasmus Stone's vision found the Perfectionists at Delphi ready for a Platonic modification of the spiritual wife theory. Lucina herself was joined in spiritual union with Jarvis Rider, a Perfectionist preacher, and in the spring of 1836 at a Perfectionist convention held at Canaseraga they came out boldly in advocacy of these principles. Not long after this Maria Brown of Brimfield visited the Perfectionists of Central New York, and soon the Platonic friendships became Antonian. Jonathan Burt tells the story thus:

"Rider had made a large number of converts, among them Thomas Chapman and wife. Chapman and I were engaged during the summer digging the Chenango Canal. During Chapman's absence not only

Rider had lived at his house but also Lucina Umphreville, Charles Lovett and Maria Brown. Rider and Mrs. Chapman on the one hand, and Lovett and Lucina Umphreville on the other, became spiritually united and, as it afterward appeared by their own confession, entered into a carnal intimacy as well. The result was that Chapman on his return beat Rider with a horse-whip and kicked him out of his house. In the midst of this operation Chapman was taken blind. In consequence he desisted from his blows, and called Rider back into the house. I was present at this catastrophe. The termination of the affair was an entire alienation of Chapman from his wife and from Rider; and she, being of a delicate constitution, sank under the troubles that came upon her, and died soon after."

Anti-Organization

In his article on the "new covenant," from which we have already quoted, Noyes wrote:

"They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." The difference between the old and new covenants in this respect is, that outward is exchanged for inward operation. Under the Jewish dispensation Moses was the principal mediator between God and man. He and a few others in succeeding ages were permitted to draw nigh to God and receive from him instruction and commandments. But the mass of the people could not be said to know the Lord. Moses, groaning under the burden of his office, longed for a system of uni-

versal personal instruction from the Lord. "Would God," said he, "that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them." The new covenant gives the blessing he desired. There is now but "one mediator between God and man, even Jesus Christ"; and he not a mediator in such a sense as implies a separation between the parties, but one in whom the parties meet and are one. So that all the Lord's people are prophets; all know the Lord. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. Ye need not that any man teach you."

This idea, that the Christian stood in a direct spiritual relation with God and needed no human leader or teacher, was exceedingly attractive to many of the early Perfectionists, and circumstances soon transpired which brought it into even greater prominence than was originally contemplated.

Theophilus R. Gates, the publisher of a paper in Philadelphia called *The Reformer and Christian,* was first introduced to the New Haven Perfectionists by John B. Foot and Chauncey Dutton, who believed that some of his writings foreshadowed the rise of Perfectionism. Anti-organization had for more than twenty years been Gates's hobby. "Sects and parties," he wrote in 1812, "have been the ruin of all genuine religion in the world. . . . But, says one, what would become of people, if they were not under the restraint of some religious community? To this I answer, I have myself been several years without restraint from any society, and under the discipline of no one. I have not lacked anything; nor do I now feel any dis-

position to turn away from the Lord's service. And hear this, all ye ends of the earth: *The true love of God in the heart is the best restraint, and a tender conscience the best discipline.* This is the restraint, and this is the discipline which all the Lord's children are under; and none other is wanting."

In the fall of 1834 there had been several complimentary exchanges of view between Gates and the Perfectionists. After Noyes's departure from New Haven at the end of January 1835 the relation became rapidly more intimate. Gates's leading idea, anti-organization, fell in with the prepossessions of Boyle and Weld, both of whom at the commencement of *The Perfectionist* had expressed themselves as strongly opposed to "sects, parties, and church organization"; and when Gates professed a deep interest in the Perfectionist doctrines, they heartily welcomed him as a brother in the faith.

The February number of *The Perfectionist,* the first that was published after Noyes's departure, contained an advertisement and commendation of Gates's paper by Boyle. The same number contained the first installment of a serial by Gates, which Boyle introduced with this editorial remark:

"On the last page will be found a pretty long extract taken from a work published by our much esteemed friend Gates twenty years ago, which he had the kindness to send us according to our request. We have seldom read a book with more interest than this, and we think that our readers will be equally interested and profited in reading this extract, and those which we expect hereafter to publish."

From this time Gates's writings occupied the post of honor in *The Perfectionist,* and when in April 1835 Weld returned from a personal visit to Philadelphia with the word, "Brother Gates I find pure gold," it was natural that Perfectionists generally should look upon him as a fully accredited leader of the cause.

The interposition of any human element whatsoever between man and God was in Gates's view the primal sin. In *The Perfectionist* for February 20, 1835, he wrote:

"God never made one of the sects now existing. They have been devised, made and fashioned wholly by men. . . . It is only a proper designation, therefore, to call the present existing sects in Christendom the false gods of this day, for, though formed by men, they receive that attention, homage and esteem, which of right belong only unto God, and exercise an authority and a power solely the prerogative of God."

With this introduction the gathering chorus of protest against human teaching and human authority may be heard in the following typical extracts:

Article by Boyle in "The Perfectionist" February 20, 1835: We believe all sectarianism to be the work of carnal men, and that all who exert the least influence to uphold it or any of the existing sects are opposed to the kingdom and glory of Christ. . . . We believe that no man or body of men have any authority to form churches, to license or ordain ministers, to send out missionaries, or to enact any rules for the government of the saints. These are the prerogatives of the only Lord God; and man by assuming them has exalted himself above God.

Dutton to Boyle, April 1, 1835: Where is he who calls himself an *apostle,* a *leader,* a *teacher* in the kingdom? Let him learn what I have learned through the rich grace of God, that he is a fool, and knoweth nothing; that he has need to learn what be the first principles of the kingdom of our Father. *Here* we are the followers of the Lamb, and are *all* taught of God. Here we are receivers, and not givers—the bride, whom the Lamb alone is fully competent to educate.

Editorial by Boyle in "The Perfectionist" May 20, 1835: We can assure our readers that we entertain no predilection for the name "Perfectionist." At first we were greatly opposed to the adoption of this name, lest by so doing we should convey to others the false impression that we were, or were about to become an organized sect, *which we know will never be.* Perfectionists, so-called, stand as independent of each other as they do of any of the antichristian churches. They will not be taught of each other, as they are "all taught of God"; nor will they acknowledge any man as a leader, or teacher, or chief, or anything of the kind; they remember the words of Him who said, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Perfectionists differ among themselves on almost all points, except the great distinguishing one, viz., perfection in holiness through the blood of the everlasting covenant. If agreement in a single point, with the fellowship of spirit in God, without any outward organization, any formal creed, any places or forms of external worship, any leaders, external rules, or combination of any kind can render us deserving of the hateful

name of *sect,* then are we a sect; but if these two things do not make us a sectarian party, then are we innocent of the charge of sectarianism. We doubt not, indeed we are certain, that all sects and sectarian names will ere long be utterly destroyed: and with the rest of the inventions, caricatures, and rubbish of Satan the name "Perfectionist" will be cast out and forgotten; to which all the saints of God will respond a long and loud *Amen.*

Dutton to Noyes, April 4, 1835: I have done receiving anything from the Bible, or from the hand of man. Nothing abides when the storm comes but what the Lord has taught.

After the opposition to human teaching had run to a certain length, the example of the apostle Paul began to be felt as an obstacle. Since his epistles abounded in exhortations, reproofs and instructions addressed to the churches under his care, it was a natural inference that he found a place in the church for human leadership in addition to the direct instructions of the Lord. This obstacle, however, was easily removed. Paul himself was a uman teacher, and his authority could properly be impeached by one who was "taught of God." Accordingly signs of restiveness against Paul are seen in Boyle as early as May 1835. Two months later Gates pushed on into definite and unqualified accusations. In October 1835 Boyle renewed the attack with increased vehemence. Finally in *The Perfectionist* for November 1835 Gates delivered a veritable home-thrust, including in his indictment not only Paul but the other apostles.

Passivism

If God had no need of human teachers for the instruction and guidance of his church, it was easy to believe that he had no need of human instrumentality in any capacity whatsoever. He could accomplish his ends by direct spiritual action, and man had only to sit passively by and "see the salvation of the Lord." The operation of this feeling among the early Perfectionists can be observed in the following extracts:

Article by Boyle in "The Perfectionist" October 20, 1834: Those who have committed soul, body and spirit, including of course their separate moral agency, to the perfect and eternal keeping of Christ have laid all the responsibility of their life and conduct upon his arm *alone,* and Christ in accepting the trust and in giving the pledge assumes the *whole* responsibility. If afterwards Satan regains the man or any part of him, Christ's character is ruined, and all confidence in him must cease forever.

Article by Noyes in "The Perfectionist" April 20, 1835: It is no part of the business of him who preaches this gospel to give directions for the conduct of believers after they believe. The faith of Jewish believers stimulated them to legal obedience. The faith of the gospel requires men to cease from their own works, to enter into rest. If I promise a man a reward at the end of a journey which I prescribe, faith in me will prompt him to the effort necessary to perform the journey. But if I promise him the same reward, and withal offer to carry him through the journey on the single condition of his committing him-

self to my care, faith in me will forbid the effort which before it required. His responsibility touches only the single act of committing himself to my care. So in respect to salvation from sin: man's responsibility touches but a single act, the act of faith which has been described.*

Edwin A. Stillman to Noyes, May 1, 1835:

There prevails a very general desire to attend our meetings, but we seldom hold any. The Lord is better to us than we are to ourselves. He does not intend that any of us shall stand in the wisdom of men.

Article by Boyle in "The Perfectionist" May 20, 1835: Why the missionaries to the heathen are not more successful:

1. Because they are the missionaries of jealous, ambitious, malevolent, and rival sects.

2. Because they go out depending upon such corruptible things as silver and gold, and not upon the simple promise of Him who can not lie.

3. Because they depend upon presses, schools, kings, queens, chiefs, human laws, public opinion—upon a mass of human machinery and carnal management, and not upon the bare arm of the living God.

These passivistic teachings at length converged upon the object of discontinuing the paper. On April 10, 1835, Stillman wrote to Noyes as follows:

"A letter has just been received from Marion, New York, the scene of Boyle's former labors, bringing very cheering news of the contagion of truth by means

* When Noyes republished this article in *The Berean* in 1847, he omitted the paragraph quoted above.—G. W. N.

of the paper, and containing an urgent request for preachers of holiness. I am fully persuaded there is far too much *leaning* on the paper, as well as on one another. 'Cursed is he that maketh the arm of flesh his trust.' It seems to me that the paper does not point distinctly enough to *Jesus*. John the Baptist was doing the will of God as long as he continued to say, 'Behold the *Lamb of God,* who taketh away the sin of the world.' Whenever the paper becomes a standard to be appealed to as authority, that moment it exalts itself against the Lord. The Lord in mercy to us grant that there may never be any man-made Perfectionists! The world has been cursed long enough by the religious offspring of human labor. Let us not add another to the list of abortions.

"Brother Weld has with him several letters from Mrs. Carrington. She seems to have been richly taught of God. . . . She utterly repudiates the idea of publishing the paper, and of 'preaching saints.' "

By this time Boyle himself, though he had originally regarded the paper as a legitimate and necessary enterprise, had come to feel that it was a "piece of carnal management"—an "arm of flesh"—superfluous as a means of instruction, since believers were "all taught of God"—unnecessary as a means of spreading the gospel, since God could make use of miracle and mystic influence to compel belief. Accordingly, after a hint in the December number that discontinuance might become necessary, the paper dragged along through three more numbers, and then in March 1836 without any formal notice to the subscribers was dropped.

CHAPTER XX

PREACHING CAMPAIGN AT PUTNEY

Noyes arrived in Putney from Brimfield at the end of February 1835, and remained at home about three months. The Noyes household at this time is thus described by Tirzah C. Miller, daughter of Noyes's sister Charlotte:

"In a large, handsome, old-fashioned house, situated upon a graceful eminence overlooking the little village of Putney on the south, dwells 'Squire Noyes with his wife and children. A rare group of locust trees of uncommon size and height gives to the place the name of 'Locust Grove.' The blue Connecticut runs through the valley a mile below, and the scenery far and near is characterized by the usual variety peculiar to the New England landscape.

" 'Squire Noyes, a portly man of seventy, is still able to keep his accounts and look after the interests of his farm. Of a reticent nature and studious habits, never alluding in any familiar way to the thoughts and feelings connected with his affections, never going abroad except as business requires him to do so, and never allowing his children to inveigle him into wearing fashionably-cut clothes, he is nevertheless of a hospitable disposition, his well-stored mind and ready tongue enabling him to entertain by the hour the

guests who gather at his table. He has always been a great reader of books and newspapers, and being accurate and methodical and possessed of a powerful memory, he has one of those minds in which every newly-found fact, thought, or anecdote is carefully pigeonholed and labeled, ready for use at a moment's notice.

"Mrs. Noyes, a tall, straight lady of about fifty-four, somewhat eccentric and independent in her ways, is considerably broken in health, so that she no longer takes much practical responsibility about household matters, but derives great enjoyment from the society of children and young people, and is never so happy as when guiding their modes of thought on moral and religious subjects. Generous and high-toned, fond of reading and conversation, she possesses in a great degree the faculty of drawing out others, and making them think well of themselves. She has also the rare trait so pleasing to children of never being too busy to answer all their eager questions and attend to their numerous demands for amusement.

"Mary, Elizabeth and Joanna, the three oldest daughters, are married and gone, though Joanna, who has not yet sailed for the West Indies, spends a part of her time at her father's. John has not yet settled at home. Horatio is in college at New Haven. Harriet, Charlotte and George, respectively eighteen, sixteen and twelve years of age, are all of the eight children who live continuously beneath the paternal roof.

"In the kitchen is Lovisa Darby, a most singular-looking English woman of about fifty. Her airs and oddities are a continual source of amusement to Harriet and Charlotte, who 'take her off' when occasion



LOCUST GROVE

offers for the entertainment of their friends. Morgan Hutchins, another oddity, is the factotum about the house.

"The family are not much given to style either in dress or furniture. They do not make half as much show as many who have less means; but they are insatiable readers. Books bearing the marks of use are in every room. *The New York American, The Evangelist, The North American Review* and a number of local papers are lying about. Visitors are impressed by the intellectual atmosphere which pervades the place."

On his arrival at Putney Noyes found that the attitude of the people toward him had undergone a complete change since his visit the year before. *The Perfectionist* had been extensively read, and there was an earnest desire to learn more of its doctrines. Accordingly during the months of March and April 1835 Noyes preached almost daily at Putney and in the neighboring villages. His operations here, he says, were for the first time entirely independent of Boyle and the New York Perfectionists, and the results, though less showy than before, were more lasting and satisfactory.

Noyes to Boyle, March 15, 1835

Dear Brother Boyle:—I perceive by the almanac that many days have passed away since I saw your face. My own memory seems to have recorded but half their number. I thank God I am no longer in a condition to bemoan the strides of time; else I should

doubtless here give you a sad saying or two in the prosing preacher's strain about the "shortness of life" and the "fleetness of time." But I am no longer cooped up "between the cradle and the grave" in that "narrow, narrow way," which is accounted by many the only right way under the sun for the children of men. I am a son of God, an inhabitant of eternity, and "why, as though living in the world," should I heed the flight of time? Let the sun double his speed, let time outrun himself—immortality asks no favors, mourns no loss.

The Lord is opening before me a wide door for the preaching of the gospel, and is giving me power that prevails against all adversaries. The day of Pentecost has not yet come in our house, but the Lord of Peace is here. Soon after I came home I visited my brother and sister in Chesterfield, and found the son of peace there also. The . . . clergyman of the village called upon me. After a long and interesting conversation with him, he requested me to preach for him on the Sabbath. I accepted his invitation, and preached to a congregation unusually large the righteousness of God. In the evening of the same day I preached in the hall of a tavern in this village. The hall, though large, could scarcely accommodate more than half of those who assembled. God preached his own gospel through me, and his word shall not return unto him void.

This village was never in such a state of agitation as it is now. Publicans and sinners hear me more gladly than the Pharisees, and many of them are receiving the truth into good and honest hearts. A

general and most intense desire to hear more prevails. I shall preach as often and as long as the Lord permits. On Thursday evening I shall preach at Dummerston by the urgent desire of several members of Mr. B.'s church, and probably at Chesterfield again in the course of the week. I converse daily with inquiring individuals, and have free and welcome access to many families. The Lord has given me an opportunity to testify concerning his Son to four clergymen since I have been here, and he has closed their mouths. You see I have full and blessed employment. The fields around me are white unto the harvest, and the Lord says, "Thrust in the sickle."

The paper has gloriously prepared the way for the preaching of faith in all this region. Many are constrained to testify that it is the most interesting paper they ever read. I found that Silas Morgan, who takes the paper here, had several months ago commenced the pure testimony, and had been mightily convincing everybody around him of the truth of the doctrine of perfection. He is a member of the Methodist Church, but plainly declares to his brethren that their case is worse than that of any other denomination. By him the door is opened for me. I see the fruit of our labors and the wisdom of God in the publication of that little paper, as I could not while I remained in New Haven. Truly we have been scattering the seed of the word of God with a broad cast, and even now the harvest is at hand.

I have occasion daily to testify against the leaven of the Pharisees, and the Lord bids me, Spare not. When I meet a self-righteous minister, otherwise a

false prophet, I am usually girded for battle. Saul hurls his javelins, but David cannot be hurt. I am in the midst of a perpetual battle, and yet have perpetual peace. Occasionally my spirit finds blessed rest in fellowship with some sweet believer, whom the Lord throws in my way; but the sons of God are few indeed.

The fourth chapter of Galatians is the weapon by which I have been enabled to drive many a devil from his refuge of lies; and I have found everywhere that as Ishmael persecuted Isaac, so the servants of God persecute his sons. I have thought the Lord would let me send you an article for the paper on the distinction between servants and sons, but you know I cannot write on every suggestion, as I once could. I will send you whatever the Lord gives, when he gives it.

Yours in the bond of love,

J. H. N.

Among those who opened their homes for Perfectionist meetings were Dr. Alexander Campbell, the leading physician of the town, and Achsah, his wife, who became deeply interested in Noyes's views; also James Crawford, a prominent lawyer, and his wife, Tirzah, who though previously irreligious now manifested all the enthusiasm of young converts.

The meetings were quite informal. Vocal prayers, personal appeals, and the measures of the professional revivalist were to a large extent discarded. Noyes usually read from the Bible, and discoursed upon some text or topic, giving opportunity for questions and

familiar conversation. Tall, broad-shouldered but thin, head massive, hair sandy in color, eyes blue-gray, temples full, forehead wide and high, nose prominent and well-shaped, lips thin, lower jaw powerful and slightly protruding, back of the head strongly developed, as he stood before his audience with polyglot Bible in hand he made an indelible impression on the memory. Still more striking were his intellectual and moral qualities. His intensity of thought, common sense, argumentative power, eloquence, sympathy, originality, earnestness, and self-sacrificing abandonment to principle all combined to give him an ascendancy over the minds of his hearers like that of the Hebrew prophets.

From the village of Putney the interest in Noyes's preaching spread to the "East Part," a suburb adjoining the Connecticut River, and soon a flourishing colony of Perfectionists was established there, including the Palmers, Lords, Whites, Shaws, Pierces and Lovells. The hospitality of these believers was unbounded, and their simplicity and brotherly kindness gave a foretaste of the spirit of communism that was to come.

As rumors of the Perfectionist campaign spread abroad invitations to preach began to pour in from neighboring towns. Noyes responded to these demands, and thus the new faith acquired a foothold in Westminister, Dummerston, Fayetteville and other places.

One morning a letter was received from Mrs. Field, wife of the Congregational minister of West Westminster, a woman unknown to the Putney Perfectionists except by reputation. She boldly denounced

the hypocrisy and lukewarmness of the churches, and made a whole-hearted profession of salvation from sin. Her position as a minister's wife as well as her eloquent description of her experience gave great currency to her testimony. Among others who were converted through her influence was Maria Clark, a young woman of superior mind, and a prominent member of the church. Not only was Miss Clark a great acquisition in herself, but her circle of influence was large and important. Her closest friend and correspondent, residing in the neighboring parish of East Westminster, was Harriet A. Holton. Like her friend, Miss Holton was a young woman of high standing in church and society. Less conspicuous than Miss Clark and less gifted in the arts of expression, she had greater depth and truer instincts. The glowing letters of Miss Clark found her waiting and eager for the faith that made free from sin. Through her friend's advocacy and the Bible arguments presented in *The Perfectionist* she became convinced that the great desire of her heart was attainable. Her full acceptance and profession of the faith soon followed. In this manner was won for the cause the woman who three years later was to become the wife of Noyes.

At the time of Miss Clark's conversion a young man twenty-one years of age, engaged as clerk in a small store, was boarding in her father's family. He was a man of warm sympathies, gracious manners, and unusual business talents. He was not a church member. Miss Clark's conversation first aroused his interest in the subject of salvation from sin, and he joined with her in inviting Noyes to preach in the village



J H NOYES. 1878
Bergman

schoolhouse. As a result of the meeting he became an ardent convert. This young man was John R. Miller, who later as financier and diplomatist gave invaluable service to the Oneida Community.

Toward the end of April Simon Lovett and Charles H. Weld came to Putney to visit Noyes. They remained at the Noyes homestead about three weeks, and assisted in the meetings. Noyes's sister Charlotte in her reminicences of this period recalls Lovett as odd and abrupt in his manners, positive in his testimony, but lacking in the power to convince. Weld on the other hand had the polish and prudence of a city clergyman. He set forth the mystical revelations of other spiritual leaders, but did not attempt to define his own position. In all he said there was a lack of the living earnestness which made Noyes's words so effective.

The success of Noyes's preaching naturally inflamed the jealousy of his opponents, and their bitterness added venom to the rumors already rife about the strange doctrines and disorderly conduct of Perfectionists. This fact brought about a painful breach in the family. Noyes's father was extremely sensitive on the subject of reputation. That his oldest son through malicious lies should be an outcast from respectable society was to him unendurable. One day he remonstrated earnestly with Noyes for not taking measures to trace out and suppress the stories which were in circulation. Noyes contended that he ought not to spend his strength in caring for worldly reputation—that he should accept revilings and false accusations as a part of the inheritance of a son of God in

this world. His father at this became angry. The result of the interview was that Noyes withdrew from the house with his two friends, and went to live with Mr. Cutler, a new convert to Perfectionism. Here they remained until they left Putney ten days later. Noyes had at that time no expectation of any further favor from his father. But in the course of a few months his father became reconciled to him and invited him home.* Ever afterward he treated him with much kindness.

It is worthy of note that in this first Perfectionist campaign at Putney Noyes's immediate family played but an inconspicuous part. His father was following the movement with scholarly attention and paternal pride, but in the main with unruffled philosophic calm. His mother, though strongly attracted by the undoubted evidences of piety in her son, was holding off on account of the many strange doctrines which he was bringing out. She had still to go through a long crucifixion of habits and ideas before she could yield a whole-hearted acceptance. Mary, Elizabeth, Joanna and Horatio were all absent from Putney. Horatio was one of the early New Haven converts, and was supposed to be still in sympathy; but his confidence had been severely shocked by his brother's New York experience, and in the course of the next year or two he gradually withdrew from fellowship. Harriet and Charlotte took a deep sisterly interest in their brother's movements, and attended his meetings regularly despite the frowns and warnings of their fashionable

* Noyes spent the winter of 1835-6 at his father's home.—G. W. N.

friends, but were as yet unconverted. George was a boy in school, not yet old enough to understand. A year and a half must still elapse before any members of Noyes's immediate family could be reckoned as belonging to the gathering Perfectionist church.

But the converts from without the family, who came into the faith during this campaign in 1835, became at once a bulwark to the cause of salvation from sin. Modest and teachable they were also faithful. Unlike the New Haven group, who were already scattering before the storms, these believers from the vicinity of Putney stood firm and united through the storms that were yet to come. Nearly all of them were either members of the Putney Community after its organization in 1838, or were staunch outside friends. And in Harriet A. Holton and John R. Miller we see the first of those that cast in their fortunes for better or for worse with Noyes, and with him labored and suffered to make the Oneida Community a true representative of the kingdom of God on earth.

CHAPTER XXI

CONFLICT WITH CHARLES H. WELD

Confession of Religious Experience

It will be remembered that after I had been engaged several weeks in the revival at Putney I was joined by Simon Lovett and Charles H. Weld. Weld was at this time in correspondence with Mrs. Carrington of Oswego, New York, who had recently been converted to Perfectionism by his labors and was soaring in the highest regions of ecstasy and boasting. She maintained for a time a pre-eminent position as spiritual critic, but afterwards abandoned the faith and became insane. Her letters were specially spiced with censures of my carnality and worldly wisdom. Weld read them in public and private as highly valuable documents.

Weld had been confirmed by his visit to T. R. Gates in the impression, of which there were traces before, that he was destined to be the president of the dispensation which Perfectionism was introducing. The following extract of a letter from Gates to Boyle, published in *The Perfectionist* July 20, 1835, will give the reader a glimpse of the prophetical flattery which he had administered to Weld's self-conceit:

"I see by your last number that you will have all the hosts of anti-christ arrayed against you; but when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord will lift up

a standard against him. If you have been called to do what some of us have had to do, they might complain, and pour out abuse, and gnaw their tongues for pain. The more you are abused and suffer, the higher you will rise; and by and by, when the Immanuel child becomes as the mighty God, you will become terrible as an army with banners, and your enemies will flee away. *It is my belief that this mighty power will yet be felt in brother W——*; but first he will have to be like Christ, crucified through weakness, and remain in the tomb for a time."

I did not at first object to the theory of Weld's pre-eminence. In consequence of the relation which was thus established between us his spirit at first prevailed over mine in respect to outward leadings. But in process of time I was constrained to cross the bent of his spirit. He was manifestly chafed as my emancipation proceeded. We finally came to downright cross purposes in the following manner: He had taken a meditative jaunt through a circle of towns in Massachusetts, and had come home full of revelations founded on mystical interpretations of the names of the places through which he had passed. For instance he said that the first place he came to was Royalton, which meant that he was to be king of the new dispensation. The next place was Templeton, which indicated that he was to be high priest also. Next was Northfield, which meant that he and I were to make a tour through the northern parts of Vermont. I felt some involuntary disgust at this nonsense, but signified my willingness to follow his leadings, if my own accorded with them. A few days

afterward I became convinced that my journey was to be in the opposite direction. Boyle was then proposing to publish an Extra, and I thought it my duty to go to New Haven and help. Weld wrestled against me for some days. At length one morning I told him that I should start immediately. He said he would walk with me a mile or two. At the end of his proposed walk I said that I wished he was going with me, and he concluded at once to go.

The war of wills between us increased. There was no external dissension, but a conscious antagonism of spirit carried on not by words but by the direct language of the heart and brain. An influence from Weld would engage me in an internal debate and I would find myself driven to the alternative of either sinking under it or breaking it by out-reasoning its subtleties. At length after beating off his enchantments again and again I told him that the issue between us was, whether he or I had the strongest mind, and that one or the other must fall. He assented. Finally I brought his spirit into a corner from which there was no retreat. Then I went to him and told him that I had won the victory. He perceived it. There was no dispute, no bitterness between us. I went immediately out and for an hour walked the fields south of the city in the agony of one who has barely escaped from a whirlpool. When I returned, I found without surprise that he had suffered a paroxysm similar to that in the Free Church the year before.

Here was the end of my personal intercourse with Charles H. Weld. I subsequently wrote him a letter of renunciation, which will be found further on in this narrative.

CHAPTER XXII

RENEWED SUSPICIONS

Confession of Religious Experience

At the close of my campaign with Weld I went with Lovett to Prospect. It was high time that my spirit should be loosed from the fixtures which were gathering about it. In the spring of 1834 Perfectionism had encountered a flood of enmity from the clergy and churches, and in the spiritual whirl of that flood I had been wrecked and stripped and cast forth to desolation. Now through Lovett a similar flood was coming upon us from New York Perfectionism, and again I was plunged into a wild whirl of spirits. The experience through which I passed during several weeks which I spent at Prospect at this time was similar to that of which I have given an account in the narrative of my visit to New York. The exercises of my mind were different in many of their details, and on the whole less revolutionary and distressing, but the general resemblance was such that it would be superfluous to recount them. The turn which my mind took at this time in regard to sexual morality had much influence on my subsequent course, and will be referred to in a later writing. I did nothing of which I had occasion to be ashamed, but I lost reputation with those who saw only externals. My spirit

was weaned from bondage to Boyle and to the paper. I was loosed from all the moorings of ordinary prudence, and sent adrift once more with no pilot but God.

Noyes's Sister Joanna to Her Mother

New Haven, June 25, 1835.

Dear Mother:—John has been in to see me this afternoon, and after a long crying fit about him I have concluded to write home. I have seen him but once before since he came; that was the Monday after. He was then in a state of great excitement, and the interview gave me no pleasure. He would not reason at all, but denounced everything and everybody. He looked haggard and careworn, and I felt positive after he left that he was deranged. This afternoon he appears different, more as he did when he came home last summer. His feelings seem to be softened down, and he exhibits some gentleness and kindness. He says he has been led through another series of trials and temptations like those he experienced in New York. He has been fighting with the adversary for the last six months, and the greatest conflict has been since he left Putney. He says he has now got the victory, and is at peace again. But his strange actions have shaken the confidence of all the Perfectionists here in him, and they turn him off from their fellowship, so that he has now no home and no friends in the wide world. He seems to feel his forlorn condition, and says he has been studying for a few days past what is best to do. He says none who know him will admit him into their shops to learn a trade, or

their stores as a clerk, though he would be willing to do something, could he find employment. I told him he could go to New York, and become a clerk in a counting-house. He seems to fall in with this idea, and says he will call and talk about it again. If he concludes to try this plan, I have told him I would let him have some money.

My heart aches for him. You know not how friendless he looks. It is enough to destroy my whole happiness to see him and think of him. He seems to be rational now, though I can discover something wild when he speaks about his particular views. His views upon holiness are, I think, rational; but on other religious subjects, and in talking to people in a way to give offense, he is certainly deranged. Do acknowledge that this is true, and do pity him. I hope he will conclude to go to New York. If his attention should be diverted from these subjects which have occupied his mind so long and so constantly, and he should be engaged about something that interested him, he would get right again.

Your daughter,

JOANNA N. HAYES.*

Answering for the family June 30th, Harriet writes:

"If you could see Father or Mother now, you would not think the contents of your letter had fallen with little weight upon them. Father seems bowed down and almost broken-hearted under it, and it is evident he feels much more than he is willing to express. He

* Joanna had recently married Samuel Hayes of New Haven, U. S. Consul at Trinidad, West Indies.—G. W. N.

wishes to have me write to you particularly not to advise John to go to New York, for he thinks it would be the worst place possible; that Galway, or this place, would be much preferable. Elizabeth would be *very* glad to have him go out to Galway, and stay with her as long as he will; and Father hopes he will go there, or come to this town."

But Harriet scouts the idea that John is crazy. She says:

"I should think from your letter that his last conflict had ushered him into an entirely new dispensation, and produced as much alteration in him as his time in New York. It is no evidence to me, however, that he is crazy or deluded. I don't know why, but I could not believe him either, though all the rest of the world did; and I think too, I am not capricious or obstinate about it, but reasonable. Charlotte and I are unwilling to acknowledge, as you wish, that he is crazy. Others here at home are rather wavering, I think. Time will bring all things to light. Give our love to John. Did you say that he feels his forlorn condition? Tell him he has friends here who think everything of him. I have no doubt but in giving up his home and friends he has received a hundred fold in this life according to the promise."

Just at this crisis, as if designed by Providence to strengthen the wavering faith of the family, letters were received telling of the wonderful results of Noyes's preaching at Westminster and the neighboring towns. One of these was from Mrs. Field, wife of the Congregational minister at West Westminster. It gave a glowing account of her recent experience in



HARRIET (NOYES) SKINNER

attaining salvation from sin. Another letter was from Maria Clark. It brought the news of Harriet A. Holton's conversion to Perfectionism, and contained this paragraph: "I have feared lest your dear brother had bestowed labor upon us in vain, but thanks be to God it has not been in vain in the Lord. I have tried for a time in part to conceal the flood of light and love which has burst upon my soul, but in vain. It must flow out in words, or the very stones would cry out. I am so unlike my former self, that I am a wonder to myself. Formerly my first desire was to please the world, and then, if there was any part of my heart left, present it to God. But He was not pleased with the offering, and I felt His frown. Now however I can rejoice in His favor, and do rejoice. And though my dear friends think me deluded, I can only feel for them love, and a strong desire that they may be led captive in the same way." From other sources came the word that four or five persons in the neighboring towns had come out boldly on the Perfectionist platform, while others were eagerly inquiring.

July 11th Joanna writes again, this time to Mary:

"I know not what to think of John. You are all so positive that he is not deranged, that I feel as if I ought not to think so. But I know not how otherwise to account for his strange conduct. I cannot reconcile his practice and feelings with my ideas of perfection, and if he is not deranged, there is no consolation for me. If he is deranged, he is more an object of pity than any one I ever heard of. He is a homeless wanderer, and is entirely dependent upon

charity. If he continues his present course of life, I know not why he will not become a beggar from door to door. I do think you at home ought to decide whether he is deranged or not. If you think he is not, and approve of the course he is taking, you ought to provide for his comfort, and not let him live in this way. If you will say that he is deranged, I will do all that I can to make him comfortable. I do not feel as if it were my duty to assist him while he pursues a course that I cannot approve, if he is really in the possession of his reason. If he would find some employment that would support him, I would help him, if it was necessary; but I do not wish to give him money if it would encourage him to pursue his present course. Do think of this, and see if I am not right."

To this Mrs. Noyes on July 18th replies:

"The effect which your late letters would have on my weak nerves you can as well imagine as I describe. All I can say is, I am enabled to trust the faithfulness of God. The way in which John is led is truly mysterious, and I could not justify his conduct but that I believe that God will sustain him. We have much evidence that, notwithstanding his singular conduct, the Lord is with him, and has spoken by him. I have been very much tried, and do not now *know* as I wish to, but I trust the truth will yet be shown me. I can do nothing for him. The manner in which he left home forbids me to think of it."

And Harriet adds: "You asked me to convince you, if I could, that John was not deranged. I don't suppose I could, if I should attempt, but the mere

effort would seem to me as foolish and absurd as to try to prove by argument that the sun shines."

Thus in spite of unfavorable appearances the confidence of Noyes's family and of Perfectionists in the vicinity of Putney remained for the most part unshaken.

CHAPTER XXIII

AN INTERVAL OF PEACE

"In the fall of 1835 during a residence of some weeks in Milford, Connecticut," writes Noyes, "my mind recovered from the confusion of my late desolating experience and took a highly favorable turn. I studied Weld's character, and emancipated myself forever from the shackles of his influence. I saw that an independent and for the present a solitary course was laid out for me. I had an anticipative view of much of the way in which I have since been led. From this period I date the birth of many of the purposes which I am still pursuing."

Noyes to His Mother

Milford, Sept. 9, 1835.

Dear Mother:—So far as I am concerned, the work of bloodshed is finished. The God of battles has given me the liberty for which I have long been contending. I am as free for God's service, as if I had never known father, or mother, or brother, or sister; and now I am ready to turn and bind up the wounds I have given in the conflict that is past. "The wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable"; not first peaceable, and then pure. During my spiritual infancy I have been compelled to fight for purity.

Now I am strong enough to proclaim peace, and to keep the peace, whether my proclamation is heeded or not. "Charity thinketh no evil." That charity is mine. I see nothing but good in the universe. All that is called evil is good to one whose head is above the clouds. "Evil to him who evil thinks."

"Charity vaunteth not itself." That charity is mine; and when I speak well of my own estate, you will understand that I magnify only the grace of God, by which alone I am what I am. God claims me as his own property, and I admit the equity of his claim. My body, soul and spirit with all that belong to them are his. I can never have goodness, or greatness, or glory separately from him. As one with him I glory. I cannot conceal his righteousness. I cannot assume a voluntary humility.

In giving an account of myself, if I do not fully gratify the curiosity expressed in Harriet's letter, I shall at least remove from your minds all just reasons for anxiety concerning me. My character has undergone a great change since I was with you, and indeed within a few weeks. You will perhaps accuse me of fickleness. Let me say before answering the charge, that to me accusation is but commendation. If a man accuses me of idleness, by implication he commends industry; and as I am conscious of possessing that good quality, I take to myself the implied commendation, and leave the expressed censure for those who deserve it. In like manner, if you charge me with fickleness, you thereby praise stability; and as I know myself to be immutable in obedience to the will of God, I thank you for your commendation. True it

is that I have passed through many changes of external character within the last two years. Like a man climbing a mountain, as I have reached one eminence after another the prospect around me has widened, the coloring and local appearance of the scenery has changed. But my eye has still rested on the summit; my nerves have still been strung for the ascent. I have never taken a step backward, and never shall, till I sit down with Christ on his Father's throne. I thank God for the varied scenery of my course; and I thank him for the immutability of its direction.

During the summer I have been studying theology in New Haven and the country round about, not with book or pen, but with all the energy of the intellect which God has given me. Severe suffering of body and mind was a necessary and salutary accompaniment of my studies, for which I give thanks. A complete separation from the sect of Perfectionists has been one of the happiest results of my meditations, and I am now free from my spiritual as well as my natural relatives.

Some of the practical conclusions to which I have been led are as follows: I have learned that the love of God, self-love, and the love of mankind are all one; that perfect, that is, enlightened self-love is and ought to be the mainspring of the human machine; that in blessing and perfecting myself I glorify God, and bless mankind. I have learned that perfect self-possession stands first in the list of blessings which God gives his sons, and that self-knowledge is the first lesson in their education. To this lesson I have been devoting my attention, and my discoveries have been

such that I have given up all thoughts of undertaking the business of teaching others, until I have attained perfect self-knowledge and perfect self-control. A preacher by implication professes to know important truth, and also to know how it should be communicated. I shall therefore never again assume the place of a public teacher, till I am certain that I possess such an amount of important truth and such a knowledge of the human mind, that I can honestly fulfill the promises of such a profession. When I compare myself with those who walk in the shadows of this world, I perceive that I know much; but when I cast a glance at the unexplored fields of knowledge comprised within the first lesson of the book which God has put into my hands, I know I am but a sophomore, and I lose all relish for the enterprise of instructing others.

Having thus studied myself out of friends and business, and being without money, I began not long since to inquire the will of God concerning temporal support. I found that the love of independence was one of the strongest cravings of my nature, and that this could never be gratified till I earned my bread as other people do. I found that the love of money, which I know is the root of all evil, the reigning idolatry especially of New England, was forever extinguished in myself, and that I need not fear to seek money lest I should adore it. In view of these considerations I came to the deliberate and fixed determination to engage in some business which should render me independent of friends for worldly sustenance. An acquaintance in this place employed me

for a time in collecting his debts, and I am about to commence with him tomorrow a survey of the town for the purpose of making a map, which will occupy us several weeks. I have engaged in these matters as Providence threw them in my way, with the expectation of getting better business soon. I am seeking my fortune, and for the present have a good season to look about me and devise ways and means.

The people of the place are very friendly, and insist upon my preaching to them on Sunday. I shall give them a talk. I can at least tell them I know nothing, and am not a preacher.

It would not be strange if I should teach a school this fall. I have courage enough to believe that I can gain the confidence of this community sufficiently for such a purpose. The man with whom I am now connected is much attached to me, and wishes to keep me here and forward my designs in every way possible.

I have given you a general sketch of my situation and prospects. Let me say for the comfort of such as prize the wisdom of this world, that in my own opinion I never was so sober and considerate as at this present time. The children of this world have been wiser than the children of light; but I promise you, they shall be so no longer, if my example and influence avail anything. I have learned that logic is worth more than poetry, and matter-of-fact industry more than building air-castles.

My head is just now full of Yankee notions about money-making and economy, and I have become a great admirer of Dr. Franklin. Is not this a wonderful metamorphosis? I hope you will all have a hearty

laugh over it, and that no suspicion of deception or fear of disappointment will shade your anticipations of my success and welfare. If my mutability forbids you to expect permanency of purpose, I can only send you to the throne of God, where my own hopes of stability are anchored. I know more fully than you can know the chaotic ocean of change over which I have been tossed. Yet I have lost no confidence in myself, because I know that God has been, and is my pilot; and as I now perceive myself riding quietly at anchor in the haven of God's peace, I have no disposition to lose the comforts of my present situation by anticipating future shipwrecks. I fear neither ocean, nor storm, nor quicksands, nor whirlpools. Innocence cannot fear.

I verily believe, Mother, if I had your bodily constitution with all its infirmities, I should soon find my way to the blessing of sleep and sound health. Your mind diseases your body, and you think you cannot control your mind. I know you can with God's help. My own mind has sometimes preyed upon my health, and I have thought that I could not control its movements. But now I know better. I have learned that God has not kindled a fire in my brain to burn me up, but to warm me; and when the fire goes beyond its proper office, I throw water on it. The pilot of a steamboat can stop his vessel in a moment even when it is under full pressure. The human mind under proper government is as obsequious to the will of its pilot as a steamboat. In the midst of the mightiest movements of which my mind is capable I stop thinking in a moment, if my life begins to suffer under the

pressure, and I can be perfectly thoughtless when I please, and sleep when I please. I should prefer to be the slave of a southern negro driver rather than be the slave of my own brain. Will you not set yourself to inquire whether you are not voluntarily the slave of your own mind, and whether you may not be disenthralled?

We shall all, men, women and children, find the necessity of studying metaphysics before we shall secure the end of our being. Horatio, Harriet, Charlotte and George have studied almost everything save the a, b, c of useful knowledge. They know much about the solar system and the fixed stars, but how much do they know about their own nature, the machinery in the midst of which they live? If God ever qualifies me to write a book, my subject shall be self-knowledge. I have begun to discover that I am fearfully and wonderfully made; that I am a glorious kingdom in myself, a kingdom that has long lain in ruins through misrule and darkness, but is yet capable of glorifying its maker and rendering a rich revenue of blessedness to its sovereign. When I have completely ascertained the limits, character and resources of this kingdom, quelled all the rebellions which waste it, and secured the revenue which is due to its king, I shall be prepared to assist other sovereigns in like enterprises. Till then I shall not write a book.

You perceive I have grown very selfish and egotistical. Herein I think my example is the best possible. "Charity begins at home" is one of those maxims in which the superior wisdom of the children of this world is manifest. Act upon it under the light of God,

and I engage you shall do more good than all the missionaries of the American Board. That love of souls which hurries and worries to save others, while self remains in ruins, is baby-benevolence, foolish and fatal kindness. I deliberately avow it as my purpose to make the most of myself. Call this selfishness if you will; it is selfishness which requires perfect benevolence. While I would exhort all "not to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think," I would also exhort all not to think more meanly of themselves than they ought to think. Independently of God all flesh is grass; but as the creatures of God you rank among the noblest of God's works. Harriet, Charlotte, awake! Stand up in the majesty of your nature! We have lived like brutes—let us live like rational human beings!

If I can in any way help any of you to burst from your bondage, tell me how. I will gladly write as often as you wish, if my communications can effect anything for this object. I care not to pamper curiosity or mere family affection, but if we may hold such correspondence as becomes immortal beings, I shall most joyfully fulfill my share of the task.

Notwithstanding your imaginations about my stoicism, I assure you my relish for a letter from home has not abated one jot or tittle in consequence of my emancipation from your apron-strings. Neither has my affection for you all suffered the least diminution. Rather it has vastly increased, and withal it has become pure. I should be glad to visit Putney according to the desires expressed by many, but at present I have no business there.

Let Mrs. Campbell know my situation, and thank her for her letter and her interest in my welfare. Tell the people to wait on the Lord, and not on me or any other man. Tell them to look for greater things than my work among them last spring. We are all yet in the wilderness. The pillar of fire is before us, but we have not yet reached the land flowing with milk and honey. I see glorious light ahead, but gross darkness yet covers the people. A few are beginning to watch for the morning.

Take care of yourselves. Be quiet about me. The peace of God be with you.

J. H. Noyes.

CHAPTER XXIV

DARKNESS AND TRIAL

Confession of Religious Experience

While I was at Milford I was induced by my friend, Mr. Lambert, and others to preach one Sunday in a schoolhouse. But the doctrine of salvation from sin, as might be supposed, was unpopular at that time in the vicinity of New Haven. While some received my discourse with interest, others were enraged by it; and before the meeting closed the roughs on the outside dashed several stones through the windows.

After concluding my engagements at Milford I went in October 1835 to New York City to look for employment. Not finding any satisfactory opening I passed on to Newark. Here I met Abram C. Smith, a former Methodist preacher, who with several others at Newark had become a Perfectionist under the influence of the New Haven paper. Smith at first, like many others at that period, regarded me with suspicion, but on further acquaintance received me with hearty good will and confidence. He was a man of great energy and enthusiasm combined with a fair degree of intelligence, and thenceforward for a number of years he rendered important service to the cause of salvation from sin.

During this visit at Newark I made a short excursion to Philadelphia for the sake of learning by per-

sonal inspection something about the character of T. R. Gates, whose writings were becoming staple commodities among the Perfectionists. Boyle had just before visited Gates, and had returned with a favorable report. I introduced myself to him, and was received in friendly style. His wife was especially cordial toward me, and related a recent dream of hers, in which she represented me as figuring in a creditable manner. She also insisted upon my receiving from her a five-dollar gold piece as a present. During the first part of the visit I sat patiently as a listener, while Gates related to me the strange things which he had been called to do. He had been driven, he said, by an irresistible divine impulse to enter the House of Representatives at Washington, and denounce the judgment of heaven on the national legislators; and when he was ordered to keep silence, he had told them he must "obey God rather than man," and had proceeded with his testimony till he was carried out. After his tales of this kind were all told I found opportunity to enter upon the business which I had with him. I suggested to him that there were some things in his writings which I did not like. I mentioned and commented particularly on his frivolous and fanciful interpretations, his fondness for dreams, visions and other marvelous manifestations, and his prophetical vagaries. He was uneasy from the first, and tried to turn the conversation into other channels. Occasionally his eyes flashed fire. While he was gone out on some errand I observed to his wife that possibly there would be difficulty between him and me and, as in that case she would probably take sides with him, I

was unwilling to keep the money which she had given me. But she refused to take it back, saying that she entirely approved of the course which I had taken with him—that she had suspected him of something like insanity, and saw that he needed correction—that I was the only person who had dealt plainly with him. After this I had further conversation with him of the same kind with the same results. Again I privately requested Mrs. Gates to take back the money, but in vain. At length in the course of a third conversation Gates broke all bounds. He said I was profaning sacred things, and he would hear such stuff no longer. "You shall leave the house," said he in conclusion, "or I will." I advised him to be calm, and reminded him that when he was ordered to be still he told the people that he must "obey God rather than man." "God sent me here," said I, "to deliver this message to you, and I too must obey God rather than man. I shall stay till I have finished." He was obliged to submit to his own rule. I sat quietly until I had finished, and then took my leave. Mrs. Gates lighted me to the door, and in the entry I took occasion the third time to offer her the money, but she said, "Keep it, keep it," and motioned me away. So I departed.

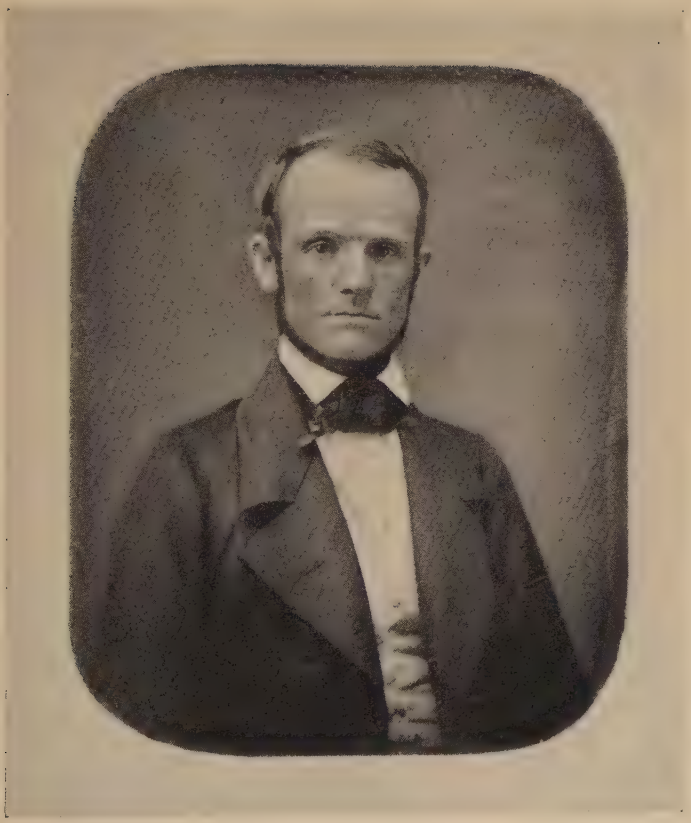
On my return from Philadelphia, after spending a few days in Newark and New York, I traveled on foot from the latter place to New Haven. My money was exhausted soon after I commenced the journey, and on the second day a cold rain set in, which made the traveling bad. I was on the road from Monday morning till Wednesday night, during which time I ate not a morsel of food, and slept but a few hours and

that in the open air. In the course of the first day the troubles around and before me pressed upon my spirit so heavily that I was very sorrowful. After battling the temptation to fretfulness an hour or two, I turned aside from the road, and went a short distance across a low isthmus to a beautiful spot on the shore of a headland projecting into the Sound. I stretched myself on the green sward, and resolved to stay there till I could go forward with a peaceful heart. The temptation receded before the decision of spirit which I now brought to bear upon it. At length I fell asleep, and rested quietly perhaps an hour. I awoke not merely in peace but with positive gladness in my heart. My spirit was in blessed harmony with the warm sunshine and the tranquil ocean. From that time I endured the hardships of the journey cheerfully.

Joanna to Her Father

New Haven, Dec. 1, 1835.

My dear Father:—As I am going to write a kind of business letter, I believe I will address it to you. I received a letter from Mother last week authorizing me to give John what money he wanted for clothing and to bear his expenses home. I told him what Mother had written, and gave him ten dollars to buy himself a hat, a pair of boots and other small things. I also told him, if there was a probability that he would remain here several days longer, he had better get a coat made. He thought he might, and went and was measured for one. Last night he called, and told me he did not know when he should go home. He



J. H. NOYES, ABOUT 1851

found much to do here, and it seemed to be the Lord's will that he should remain here for the present. He wished however to go home, and was ready to at any time when he could see it was his duty, and still thought he should soon.

Now what troubles me and my reason for writing is to know, whether I was to furnish him with money only upon condition that he came home. Mother says: "If John does not come home, we know of no way to help him"; and I have thought perhaps I had no right to give him money expecting you would repay me, if he remained here. I told him my scruples last night, and that I should not give him any more as coming from you until I had written and inquired, but that I would give him twenty dollars to pay for his coat upon my own responsibility, and you could do as you thought right about paying me again. I presume he will go home before long, but, as he professes to be governed in everything by direct influence from God and has no will or plans of his own, it is of course impossible to tell with certainty whether he will or not, or to persuade him to do it unless he sees it to be God's will. He is doing nothing here but talking with people as he has opportunity, but he thinks he is doing good in that way. He is not earning anything, and has no funds but what I have furnished.

Your affectionate daughter,

J. N. Hayes.

Joanna to Her Mother

New Haven, Dec. 10, 1835.

My dear Mother:—I have received your two letters,

and sit down to say a word in answer. I suspect John is not in town, as I have seen nothing of him for several days. I have thought of sending to Dutton, who is here, to inquire if he knew where he was, but think he must have arrived home before this, and I need not be at the trouble.

I am very glad that there is a prospect of his getting a school in Putney, and hope he will be induced to accept of the offer. It will be pleasanter for him and you all to have him doing something like that, I should think, and I see not why he may not be as much in the way of his duty as if otherwise employed.

I should hesitate about showing him your last letter, Mother, because I know, if you undertake to dictate to him or try to persuade him he is wrong in anything, you will get into a quarrel. The only way is to let him think as he has a mind to, and let him alone. If he is wrong in anything, he will get right far sooner if you take this course than if you attempt to reason with him. He is so much afraid of being influenced by *man's* wisdom and of being under bondage, as he calls it, that he will not listen to advice or reproof, especially from any of his relatives. So beware!

Love to all. Your affectionate

J. N. Hayes.

Confession of Religious Experience

After remaining a few weeks at New Haven I started for Putney on the 16th of December, a day made memorable to the nation by the "great fire" in

New York City. Many will recollect that it was one of the coldest days ever known in this climate. In fact the immense sweep of the fire was owing to the impossibility of working the fire engines, which froze up in the firemen's hands. On that day I rode from New Haven to Hartford, a distance of forty miles, in a common stage coach with only ordinary clothing. The other passengers pitied me for my lack of clothing and expressed fears that I should freeze to death. I told them that I should get along well enough by help of a theory which I had about cold and heat, which was this: Cold and fear produce the same effect upon the body; cold operating from without causes trembling, and fear operating from within causes trembling. It is reasonable then to assume that the opposites of these two elements, heat and courage, are also identical in their effects; that as heat operating from without warms and comforts the body, so courage operating from within may warm and comfort the body. One of the passengers admitted that this was a good theory, and that it was available to some extent, but he did not believe that it would "work down into the feet" on such a day as that. I assured him that I had full faith in it and would give it a fair trial. By the battling of my heart I kept myself quite comfortable most of the way, but at length my feet began to suffer. At this crisis, nerved as I was by previous discussion and success, I put forth a vehement action of the will in the direction of the quarter assailed, and immediately felt a warm current flowing down into my feet as distinctly as if it had been a bath of warm water. I had no further serious distress from the cold, and prob-

ably reached Hartford with less suffering than my fellow-travelers with all their protectives.

I remained at Putney through the winter of 1835-6. Perfectionism at that time was in its darkest trial. Disorder and dissensions within and reproach from without rendered its desolation complete. Though I was separated from the sect, yet I felt myself identified with its testimony, and its desolation came upon me like a flood. I spent that winter chiefly in self-examination, and conflict with the spirit of accusation. I was compelled to take a minute measurement of my own responsibility for the disastrous consequences which seemed to be following the doctrines, in the publication of which I had been so deeply concerned. In a substantial sense I stood before the judgment seat of Christ. My works were tried by fire; and although the result of the trial was altogether favorable to my peace, my sufferings for several months were severe. The scrutiny through which I passed, instead of convicting me of sin, purged and healed my conscience; but it deepened my sense of responsibility, and impressed upon my spirit a sobriety and a resolution to resist corruption among professed Perfectionists, which has since been of great value to me.

CHAPTER XXV

EFFORTS AT REHABILITATION

About the first of February 1836 Noyes in a letter to Boyle made an earnest plea for a radical change in the policy of the paper. He desired that more recognition should be given to the legitimate sphere of the intellect as a factor in religious experience, that the scope of the paper be broadened to include other than strictly theological topics, and that every department of human life be subjected to the same rigid tests as those which had been applied by Perfectionists to traditional religion. Boyle in his reply expressed the greatest interest in these proposals, and offered to "open the entire columns of the paper" to Noyes, if he would put his thoughts in a form for publication. But antinomianism had by this time fastened its fang on the paper, and in less than six weeks, as we have seen, it was discontinued.

In the same letter Boyle referred to the general state of Perfectionism at this time in the following terms:

"Dear John:—I believe that the Lord's people have been in a dreadful hour of temptation, and I can say that I feel an unwonted sympathy toward them all, and such love as I have never felt before. So do I feel also toward a blind church and a blind world. I fully believe that those honest but credulous children among

the saints, who have been carried to and fro, will yet all come out right. The Lord is doing a strange work, and bringing to pass his strange act, and we may well expect strange things. Hence, while I do not approve of many things that are done, they do not give me any uneasiness. . . . I received a letter from S—— in Brimfield, who says the bundling business is going on more briskly than ever. To me this seems at best but small business. If their aim is, as I am told, to break down false modesty, it is hewing at the branches. None of these things nor any other still more dark move me. God is at the helm. All will end well.

"Your ever affectionate brother,

"James Boyle."

While Noyes was residing at home during this winter and spring of 1836, he made strenuous efforts to detach his mother from the religious preconceptions in which she had been brought up, and establish her firmly upon the platform of salvation from sin. But though she assented intellectually to most of his doctrines, she could not as yet follow him with her emotions and will. At last the contention between them became so sharp, that Noyes decided to leave home.

Confession of Religious Experience

In the spring under a strong spiritual impulse I left home suddenly, and traveled on foot to Albany. There I called on the Annesleys and some other religionists, but found little to detain me, and soon began to inquire where I should next direct my steps. As I walked the street ruminating on this question a spiritual voice said to me, "Go south." Immediately I set my face in that direction.

At a few miles' distance from Albany a young man walking with a staff and budget, presenting an appearance half-way between that of a vagabond and a gentleman, overtook me. Having concluded to walk together for the day we fell into various conversation. It was not long before my fellow-traveler, presuming me to be as desperate an adventurer as himself, proposed to me to join him in robbing on the highway. I replied that I thought we could find a better way to get a living. Soon afterward I introduced the subject of religion. At first he declared that he was not afraid that he should be shut out of heaven. I said: "There shall in no wise enter therein anything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." He went on to defend his position, but I answered his arguments, and soon with deep anxiety he asked me to tell him what he should do to be saved. In the midst of our conversation he exclaimed: "Now I know the meaning of the dream which I had last night. I dreamed that I was standing in the open air with a crowd of persons early in the morning, looking toward the east. And we saw a star arise, and it became larger and larger till at last it was a glorious sun. The people were in great perplexity and fear, asking one another, 'What does this mean?' Then an impulse seized me, and I said loudly to the people: 'That is the sign of the Son of man.' I understood not what I was saying, and when I awoke, I wondered what could have put these words into my head, for Bible language had been altogether foreign from my thoughts. The dream made a great impression upon me."

The young man was now completely subdued and, as

he approached the crisis of heart-surrender, his agony of mind became overwhelming. We sat down on a grassy bank, and he covered his face with his hands. At length he exclaimed, "I see him! I see him!" "Who is it that you see?" I asked. "Christ," said he; and he put out his arms as if to clasp some visible person. Meanwhile his eyes were closed. Soon after this he took from his pocket a wallet, several pieces of money and a hand of tobacco, and threw them as far as he could. I asked with some astonishment what he meant by that. He replied, "I stole those last night!" His plan was now to find employment, that he might obtain the means of clothing himself decently and going home. Near night we stopped at a village where he succeeded in letting himself to a farmer for several months. I gave him the best advice I could, especially enjoining upon him to procure a Bible. Then I notified him that my responsibility for him was at an end. We parted with many expressions of affection, and I never saw him afterwards.

Crossing the river at Hudson and taking an easterly course I arrived the next day at Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Here I was hospitably received by Augustus Beach, a Baptist elder, who had taken the New Haven paper and was much interested in its doctrines. I found him a person of the amiable sort, reflective and tender-hearted. We had much profitable conversation during the few days which I passed at his house, and the kindness with which he supplied my wants and commended me to God at parting will ever be a pleasant remembrance to me. He subsequently became a

convert to Miller's theory of the second advent, and wrote me several letters of warning in relation to that subject, which were distinguished more for their good spirit than their good sense.

From Pittsfield I went to Southampton. There I learned from Sardis Chapman much that was new and alarming to me about the bundling and other strange proceedings of Perfectionists at Brimfield and Southampton. I had been prepared by the fiery judgment through which I had passed during the preceding winter to estimate correctly the character of those proceedings, and to take my stand firmly against them even at the expense of renouncing fellowship with every Perfectionist in the world.

After a short visit at Southampton I went to New Haven and boarded several weeks at Abiud Tuttle's. Dutton with his wife was in the city. He was just then at the turning-point of his career. Not long before he had been deeply involved in the foolish proceedings to which allusion has been made, and a reaction toward legality had probably commenced. He was becoming a cold Perfectionist, and had returned to the occupation in which he had been engaged before he commenced studying for the ministry, that of a journeyman printer.

Boyle also was at this time preparing to withdraw from the business of propagating the doctrine of holiness. The prospects of the cause were discouraging, and he was looking toward other fields. After stopping the paper he had gone to work in a machine shop at Newark. He came to New Haven however, while I was in that region, and in conversation with him and

Dutton I referred to the case of the disciples, who in despair of the cause of their Master turned back after his death to their old employment of fishing. I told them that, whatever they might do, I for one would not "go a-fishing." I felt that the darkest time was not the time for me to desert my post, and I resolved to labor alone, if necessary, to repair the breaches of our cause.

In this spirit I went in the course of the summer to Prospect at the solicitation of the brethren there, and labored among them several weeks, teaching "publicly and from house to house," warning "every one night and day with tears." I made an earnest effort to exorcise the death-like spirit of antinomianism, which had fallen on believers there as elsewhere, and to gather them into unity and order. My heart was burdened with an agony of desire that Christ might be honored in his saints, and that a standard might be lifted up against the flood of iniquity which was coming in. The experiment was not very successful, and I went away at length in much sorrow. But I had cleared my own soul of responsibility, and was not disheartened.

After this I visited David Harrison in Meriden, found him in much trouble of mind by reason of bondage to his family and the cares of the world, and after a week or two he proposed to go out with me, not knowing whither, as my practice had been in many cases. We went forth committing our steps to the Lord, and finally came to New Haven. In the fall of 1835, when I was almost destitute of friends and money, I had taken board and lodging at the Temper-

ance House in New Haven under the persuasion that it was the will of God and that he would enable me, as he had in all cases before, to pay my debts. At my departure my debts were paid by the unasked liberality of my sister, who was then residing in New Haven. In the spring of 1836 I had again taken board at the same place, and after remaining several weeks the brethren from Prospect paid my bill, and took me home with them. I told Harrison these facts, and said to him: "I believe it is the will of God that we should have a season of undisturbed communion with each other. If you will take board with me at the Temperance House, I will pay your bill." Accordingly we remained there in much outward contempt but in much inward contentment somewhat more than six weeks. When we had been there four weeks James Boyle proposed to me to go with him to Newark, and A. C. Smith offered to pay our board. Being alone with Harrison I said to him: "Here is a fair offer of deliverance from our debt. But we have many things yet to say. I will not leave this place till God clearly manifests his will." Harrison assented, and Boyle and Smith left us. We remained two weeks more, waiting on the Lord in full confidence as before. As the end of that time drew near, we perceived that the object of our session was accomplished. A few days before we left, Mr. Tuttle, the landlord, mentioned to me that he was in want of money. I told him I would take measures to pay our board immediately. I took the promised measures by laying our case before God. On the third morning from this time I went out with a determination never to come back without the needed

money. As I walked across the green it occurred to me that I had several years before borrowed fifty dollars of Thomas Trowbridge, a merchant in the city and a distant relative of mine. Directly I determined to walk down upon the wharf, saying within myself: "If the Lord throws him in my way, I will make known to him my wants." At the end of the wharf I met him returning towards the city. I turned and walked with him. Our conversation fell upon some information which he had received from my brother, who was engineering on Staten Island. He said that there was a good demand for labor there. I then told him my situation, and said to him: "Now if you are willing to take my debt upon you, I will go to Staten Island and, if possible, engage in business with my brother, and pay you as soon as I can raise the money. Only mind one thing: I have nothing to do with my father, and you must not look to him for your pay." He readily loaned me fifty dollars, and I gave him my note. Not long afterward I learned that he had sent notice of the debt to my father directly after it was contracted, and the fifty dollars were refunded within a few days. Some said, I ought to pay my father. I said, No. If I must have the name of being a minor or a knave, I will have the game.

In September I went to Newark and remained some days at the home of A. C. Smith, with whom Boyle was then living. While I was there an amusing incident occurred. Certain Methodists, professedly of the more liberal sort, were in the habit of meeting weekly at the house of a Mr. Gould. Their meetings were called "free," and it was understood that believers of every

name were at liberty to speak in them. Several of the Perfectionists, including Boyle and myself, attended one evening, and in the course of the exercises I arose and offered my testimony. My name and profession were unknown to the audience. I conformed as well as I could to the manners of the Methodists, but the matter of my discourse was strongly tinctured with the heresies of Perfectionism. As I proceeded the people grew warm in their approbation. "Amen," "Glory," "Hallelujah," "Bless God" resounded from all parts of the house. At length one man more excitable than the rest arose and walked back and forth before the audience, shouting and clapping his hands and leaping for joy. But during the following week the question, "Who is that young man?" passed around, and the answer was, "It is crazy John Noyes, the Perfectionist." This was a damper! At the next meeting one of the leading patrons remarked in a bland but significant way, that the meetings were called free—and they were free—free for all to testify—that is, all who would keep within the limits of Methodist doctrine! Every one knew that this was to fence me out. But before the meeting closed I arose, and spoke at some length on topics which I knew belonged to Wesley's theology. So far as my speech alone was concerned there was as much to call forth approving Amens as in the previous one. But it was received in blank silence.

CHAPTER XXVI

PERFECTIONISM IN PUTNEY AND VICINITY, JULY 1835 TO NOVEMBER 1836

Lydia C. Campbell to Harriet A. Holton

Putney, July 20, 1835.

My dear Sister:—Although years have passed away since I saw your face, yet hearing you have obtained the faith of Jesus Christ I address you by the endearing appellation of sister, for we are one in Christ. . . . Oh, what a glorious, blessed privilege! The spirit of life in Jesus Christ hath made me free from the law of sin and death. . . . I am happy. I have no anxiety, no care. I know the Lord is able to keep what I have committed unto him, and will keep it, even my all.

The Lord has brought some in this place to confess Christ a whole Savior from sin and death, and I trust he will bring more into the liberty of the gospel. . . . I believe Brother J. H. Noyes is waxing strong, and testifying the truth with great power. His mother and sisters are rejoicing in the truth, though they have not confessed Christ. I think they will soon get the victory.

Maria Clark to Harriet A. Holton, October 25, 1835

I find by your letter you have been feeling the same ardent desire to increase in knowledge that I have the

past few days. I know that knowledge without charity puffeth up; but I would only have the one keep pace with the other. My desires have been more ardent than ever not only to increase in the knowledge of God's written word but in all other that is useful.

Mary Clark to Harriet A. Holton

Westminster, March 10, 1836.

My dear Sister:—I received your kind letter, and I need not tell you the joy and comfort which it gave me. It is so refreshing to hear from one who does with the whole heart trust the Lord our God.

I have been to Putney the past week. I found the excitement against the doctrine of perfection to be much stronger than I have ever before known it. What it will amount to, I know not, but God will overrule it all for good. . . .

I think much of the promise, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst." I cannot say that I do not at times thirst for more of the presence of the living God, and there are times when I feel as if I were filled with his presence. Is this owing to my want of faith? I have no doubt at any time of my acceptance with him. I know and feel assured, that my sins are pardoned and that I am justified by his grace. Yet I do not think that I have felt that eternal security that some have; still I do not doubt it. I feel it my duty to be constantly pressing forward and ever on my guard against the snares of the adversary of souls. Perhaps you will say, You have no interest in the new covenant. I see much beauty in it, and feel that it is the only way we can

come to a knowledge of the Saviour; but I often feel that perhaps I have not sold all for the pearl of great price. God knoweth my heart, that, if I have not, it is my desire to do so.

Yours in the bonds of love,

MARY CLARK.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Mrs. Tirzah Crawford

Putney, March 27, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—Having lately had conversation with you on subjects in which we have a mutual interest I feel an inclination to put pen to paper and send you some of my thoughts since I saw you.

Saturday after a very busy forenoon I went to my chamber, thinking to spend the remainder of the day much alone, and determined to improve the opportunity in attention to the subject of religion generally.

Though I had pretty much made up my mind that I would attend meeting and again unite in the ordinances of religion, I had concluded to wait some longer before I wholly decided. I have ever felt that outward observances of the church are of little value while the heart is not right, and I endeavored to divest myself of everything except communion with my own heart. . . . I found what fully settled my mind with regard to the church for the present. . . . Let us go forth and suffer with Christ without the gate, although it is a reproach and may expose us to a great deal more than we have any idea of. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. . . .

Your affectionate friend,

P. NOYES.

Mrs. Tirzah Crawford to Mrs. Polly Noyes

Putney, April 2, 1836.

I thank you, Mrs. Noyes, for your views expressed to me in your communication this week. . . . I think your interpretation clearly scriptural. But what an enlarged and sublime view of the gospel does this present! How infinitely beyond anything we have ever received from former teaching! To see everything necessary to restore us to the purity of our first parents *accomplished in Christ,* and to know that all we have to do to receive the benefit is to *heartily* believe this!

Now how far are we accountable for not believing? Can we believe unto salvation, until we feel the power of the Holy Ghost in some degree showing us clearly, *this is the truth?* . . . It seems to me sometimes that I see so clearly the fullness there is in Christ, I would fain exercise the right kind of faith, if I only had the ability, but there is something so impenetrably *hard* within, that with all my reasonings and imaginary desires it still maintains *firmly* its post. Must we not feel that God only can subdue the heart, and that we must be as entirely helpless and dependent upon him and as free from all judgments and opinions of our own as an infant in the hands of its mother? Miss Clark told me that, although she intellectually saw that Christ came the second time at the destruction of Jerusalem, yet she had to be taught this again by God himself; and that there was nothing, which she before thought she firmly believed, but what she had been compelled to receive again in the same way.

I infer, Mrs. Noyes, from what you say relative

to attending meeting, that your views are something as mine have been ever since I have seen this "new and living way," whereby we may obtain access to God. I feel that we ought not in the most indirect manner uphold any system our consciences do not approve, and I believe that "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" but in true believers. I believe too that the endeavor to win those who differ from us by conforming to their ritual would only tend to stir them up to persecute us with something of the same spirit the Jews of Asia did Paul, when he was conforming to some of their Jewish customs. But I say also, "Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind, that whatever we do we may do *heartily,* as unto the Lord and not unto man."

Mrs. Noyes, whenever you have any new or striking views which concern us mutually, I shall esteem it quite a favor to receive the communication of them.

. . .

Since I wrote the foregoing I have been told that John has returned. Is it true? If so, may I be permitted to know the reasons he gives? I always feel that what concerns *John* is not to be confined exclusively to the family of Esq. Noyes, but that all his brothers and sisters, of whom he has a vast number, are interested.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Mrs. Tirzah Crawford

Locust Grove, April 3, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—All I can say of John is, he has come home once more to entreat us to receive the Savior and be reconciled to God, and I am brought

under fearful apprehension that an awful crisis is at hand. I have had a great deal of conversation with him. I never thought him more spiritual or more consistent than he is now. I see the immense distance there is between the children of God and the children of this world. What we want is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This it must be the prerogative of God to give. For this we can look and wait, and such faith as we have alone can keep us from despair. I cannot instruct others, while I am blind myself, but I adopt this as my best support: *believe, believe, believe.*

I went this morning with John over to Mr. Palmer's. We had a very pleasant interview. Their spirits are surely heavenly. John chose to remain there. He continues to unfold much truth, and to me vastly important, while at the same time he says things that make me think the struggle between flesh and spirit is carried to an extreme, and preys upon him. It is a trial for me, from which may God in his good time deliver me. . . .

Your affectionate friend,

P. Noyes.

Mrs. Tirzah Crawford to Mrs. Polly Noyes

Putney, April 5, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Noyes:—Thank you for the contents of your last communication. . . . My anxieties and searchings are to this point at present, that Christ is in every human being, and that all previous to putting off the old man are possessed of two natures, an old one and a new one. All the testimony I can find seems to decide the case affirmatively; still, it appears too

much to believe! I see a great change will be wrought in one who heartily receives this as truth, and I intend not to let it rest until I am decided. I should like to hear John speak on this, as he has on other subjects, at our discussion meetings. He would doubtless bring forth much more proof from the Bible than my limited researches have enabled me to do. Can we not have more of these social meetings? Not having the well of water within me, which springs up spontaneously, or not *believing* I have it, I find I am continually thirsting for the well of Jacob, that is, to feel that stimulus to desire which John's speaking or the paper creates. I know in this way our meetings have done me good, as well as having been the means of greatly increasing my knowledge.

It seems to me John has not come back for nought, but in some way to do good. It does not remind me of Matthew's predictions to hear that John warns you of an approaching crisis. No, it reminds me more of the warnings and denunciations of the prophets of old, and also of the warnings and cautions of the apostles during the transition period.

I wish, Mrs. Noyes, if it would not be too much trouble for you, you would occasionally write me John's ideas of things and subjects, which strike you as new and important. In this way you will *greatly* oblige me.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Mrs. Crawford

Putney, April 7, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—I went over to see John yesterday. He appeared glad as usual to see me; said he was contented, and all appeared pleased and happy

—more however than ever determined to crucify not only the lusts but affections. Thought he should not remain there long. What is before us, I know not. Mr. Palmer among other things said he considered it providential that John came there, as he had been taught by him many things which were of great use to him. Mrs. Palmer said that a year ago their home might be said to be where Satan's seat was; now it was the retired abode of a son of God. With other questions I asked her if she always had that witness within, that she needed no more assurance. She said for the week past she had not had so clear a witness as she had had; whether it was John's advanced faith or not, she did not know. For my part I don't know what to think. They united, however, to strip me of every source of comfort. John said, "Abandon everything but Christ." But he hides himself. Friends, children, Bible, prayer are all to me like senseless idols as to any real comfort, and even the God I have so long worshipped I am ready to say, 'tis to me as an adversary, or that I do not know the true God.

You will not wonder that I say to all, *take care of yourselves,* no help can come from me. Is not this a day of burning? Shall we ever know peace? Shall we find any till God is pleased to reveal his Son in us?

Your affectionate friend,

P. Noyes.

Mrs. Crawford to Mrs. Polly Noyes

Putney, About May 5, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Noyes:—Mr. Palmer spoke of John's visit at his house as being a great blessing to him. He

says he has obtained that knowledge of him, which he could not do by hearing him preach, and that he cannot now say, as Peter did of Christ, "I know not the man"; but he is willing to confess that he *does know him* notwithstanding his low repute, and *he* feels that he is no *common* person. I do believe we do not realize what a blessing we enjoy in having John in our midst. Oh, that his mouth could be opened to proclaim the gospel with the power that none could resist it!

The stupidity that rests on my mind—or *heart* I might more properly say, for I think much but *feel* little—is great indeed! Compared with last spring I find I am greatly behind. Then I *enjoyed all,* I believed, and I had a peace in believing intellectually, that I never felt before or since. I fear that this is the experience of many besides myself. One thing I do know, there is no peace to the wicked, nor to one who feels he commits sin.

With much respect,

T. M. Crawford.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Mrs. Crawford

Putney, May 16, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—We had a letter yesterday from John in New Haven. It is much in his usual style: will remain there a while, trusting quietly that his wants will be all supplied. What we shall hear next, I know not, but I am sure I shall be prepared for it, whatever it may be. I am now waiting on the Lord, that I may know what to say to him; and may He show me where is the door of hope!

If I can only begin a letter to Mrs. W., perhaps

yourself and Mrs. C. will add to it. I do not feel like sending any more of John's letters out.

Your friend,

P. NOYES.

Mrs. Crawford to Mrs. Polly Noyes

Putney, May 17, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Noyes:—What I said respecting your writing Abby I did not say reproachfully, but only to remind you and Harriet, that you encouraged her, when she left, to expect a letter *sometime*. Anything you could write relative to the *truth* would be very welcome. If you do not choose to say anything of John, you need not, for a letter I sent her not long since was nearly filled with his sayings and doings. Among other things I told her he had during the past season conducted himself so contrary to what the wisdom of this world would dictate, that some thought him a *monomaniac*. But Abby will not think so from remarks which I repeated to her: "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country, and *among his own kindred*."

It appears to me, Mrs. Noyes, from the manner in which you speak of John of late, that your mind is operated upon by two influences, one that is favorable to John and one that is not. I now speak relative to his being a son of God. If Jesus Christ has *ever* come in the flesh of his saints, I believe he is in *John*, and whatever appears strange to us, who only see through a glass darkly, may be accounted for on the supposition that *he* is not of this world. Had you not written

what you did at the close of your note, I should have begged the favor of reading John's letter. If he writes *"as usual,"* he writes *well.* Mrs. Noyes, I hope God will enable you to feel confidently that he is the Lord's, and that He supplies all his wants. How can any one doubt John's being right, when they consider that he has literally as well as heartily obeyed Christ's injunction to forsake all for him. I wish I had such evidence of the piety of a single other individual that I have of his. And the vast amount of truth, which God has taught him and which we have heard, is another convincing proof of his genuineness.

I like your views, so far as you expressed them, on the passage you gave us for consideration. I think we must begin to feed on something more substantial than bread alone, "even upon every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." I know for myself that I do not enough hunger for this food. When we do really hunger and thirst for righteousness as for our bodily sustenance, "we shall be filled."

I often think of Mrs. Carrington's prayer, "Lord, teach me, teach me," and wish to adopt it as the language of my heart. I feel that we ought to glorify God by acknowledging what he has done in others in conforming them to his own image, but we ought not to depend on their teaching or assistance as though they possessed inherent power and goodness, but go ourselves to the fountain-head, that we may drink of the unadulterated spring.

I hope, Mrs. Noyes, you will feel disposed to go to the East Part of the town on Thursday, if we go. I think if you feel able, you will be much refreshed by

meeting the good sisters there. I think some of them are in advance of us.

Yours,

T. CRAWFORD.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Harriet A. Holton

Putney, May 30, 1836.

Dear Miss Holton:—Though I have never had the happiness of meeting you, you will allow me to introduce myself in this way as in some sense an acquaintance through the correspondence of yourself and friends in this place. Though I cannot speak in your language, I am interested, and hope I truly rejoice in the testimony you are enabled to give to the truth of the gospel.

Harriet Noyes to Charlotte Noyes

Putney, Sept. 15, 1836.

Dear Charlotte:—Miss Harriet Holton has been to New Haven, but she found Dutton gone, and heard nothing from John, though to see or hear from them was her principal object. She and Miss Clark are very much advanced.

Mrs. Lydia Campbell to Harriet A. Holton

Putney, October 1836.

My dear Miss Holton:—The Lord is doing wonders in the East Part of this town. There are many who are anxiously examining the truth, and some who are rejoicing in God their Savior. Mr. Palmer, who has been one of the bitterest opposers of the doctrine

of holiness, now confesses Christ a whole Savior from sin, and is rejoicing in the truth. . . .

Professors of religion generally in this part of the town are more opposed to the doctrine of perfection than they were, since the attention of the people at the East Part has been called to the subject. My sister Tirzah does not yet confess Christ, though she appears more and more engaged upon the subject. This is the case with many here. Mrs. Noyes, I believe, has ceased from her own works, and feels that she can trust Christ. Harriet and Charlotte, I fear, are not advancing at all. I have seen Mrs. Shaw several times. She is a shining light. She feels that she has entered the kingdom to go no more out forever.

Yours in love,

L. CAMPBELL.

Harriet A. Holton to Mrs. Tirzah Crawford

Westminster, Nov. 7, 1836.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—Sister Maria visibly advances in the divine life, or rather sees and feels more clearly the *fullness of God.* The Lord verifies his promise in her, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles." We have taken sweet counsel together. . . . We rejoice in hearing of the advance of our brethren and sisters in Putney: that Sister Lydia is carried above what in the flesh would be called affliction. She can surely say with another, "Gold grows brighter by rubbing." We can join Sister Shaw in her testimony, that the way to stand fast in our liberty is to go forth in the strength and name of Christ,

declare and make use of our liberty. "Reckon yourself indeed dead unto sin, and alive unto God."

We wish to hear from you. Love to the saints. Love to all the world from

H. A. Holton.

CHAPTER XXVII

GLIMPSES OF THE NOYES FAMILY
JANUARY 1835 TO NOVEMBER 1836

Charlotte to Horatio, Jan. 25, 1835

We have received the fifth number of *The Perfectionist.* I have read it through. It is rather too deep for me—some pieces, I mean. How I wish John would come home! Why doesn't he? For my part I think he ought to come and preach to us. There are Mr. Boyle and Dutton and Chapman about there, and we have none here. I wish, when you write, you would tell us where John is, what he is doing, what he says, and everything else about him; for how can we help wishing to know?

I cannot tell you what I think about perfection, for I am so unsettled that I do not know what to believe. Only I know this, I do not believe in the old way. Don't you think I am in a bad state?

Mrs. Polly Noyes to J. H. Noyes, Jan. 25, 1835

The two long articles in the December number of *The Perfectionist* I thought contained sound argument and threw a great deal of light on these subjects; and I think truth may be gathered from the paper generally. The last number was quite interesting. . . .

Your father reads it with great interest and apparent satisfaction, though I have no reason to believe that his heart is touched. He talks like one who thinks on the subject. . . .

Mr. Mead says your doctrine of faith, which leads us to see that we cannot serve God and Mammon, he thinks must do good, and that you give in some of your late letters the best exemplification of faith that he has met with in modern times.

L. G. Mead to J. H. Noyes, Jan. 25, 1835

Mary sends her love to you. She takes a great interest in your paper; says she never liked to read any paper half as well. Several of our Chesterfield people read it, and I think you will have a respectable list of subscribers here by and by. I have so many heresies of my own to answer for, I dare not be very active in propagating *yours*. I find, however, several are beginning to be inquisitive upon the subject.

Harriet to Joanna, Feb. 25, 1835

Tell John we do want he should come home, *not* because we are *anxious* about him, but because we *love* him, and want to *see* him. Do make him come, if it is consistent with his avocations. . . .

Have you become a Perfectionist yet? I think Mary has really got the faith.

Joanna to the Family at Putney

New Haven, April 28, 1835.

Dear Friends:—. . . I am very happy here; far

more so than I anticipated, when I left home. My opportunity for improvement is as great as it could be in any situation. And Mother, do not think that I shall forget the one thing needful. I could not well here, for religion is the theme that interests this family more than anything else at present. Of seven students boarding here six have become pious since I came. There is a great change in them. The death of Mrs. Herbert led them to reflect. They were before very gay. They are now so humble, so engaged. One lady boarding here is precisely like Abby Fitch—just so pious and always doing good. She is a tract distributor, and has given me an invitation to accompany her on an excursion of this kind this afternoon. I feel very much interested in her.

The revival in College is very powerful, but the city does not share in the blessing. Mr. Foot's meeting had little effect.

Horatio has just been in to tell me he has an appointment. It will be gratifying to Papa. I should think he stood high as to scholarship. He is quite animated with the idea of going home—thinks he will have a fine visit with John and all. I hope, if possible, he will go to Galway; * and why cannot one of the girls go with him? . . .

If the girls wish to know something about the fashions, I will tell them what I can. Their Tuscan bonnets are just as they make them here. Also they plait gauze ribbon around the front, either inside or out, as you please—*narrow gauze* ribbon, like the trimming,

* Galway, New York, was the home of Noyes's sister, Elizabeth, who had married Dr. Ransom.—G. W. N.

or *blond lace.* I am going to get mine altered, and trimmed with yellow. If they are going to have new silk dresses, get blue black. Capes are made form, like their white scolloped ones, with a ruffle upon the edge, corded and plaited on with box plait. Muslin and lace *worked* capes and collars are much worn. . . . I don't know whether I can afford to make a present of the combs. The brass ones are too vulgar. These are gilt.

I am very glad John is at home, on his account. Hope he will stay, if consistent. The subject of Perfectionism is occasionally brought up by those I meet with, but none believe in it. I do not condemn it, but am sometimes placed in a rather unpleasant situation because of it.

I should be very glad if I had something to send more than love to all. Sometime perhaps I shall. But I do send a great deal of love. And do all write to me. Find all the fault with me that you wish to. Do not fear; it will do me good.

Yours affectionately,

JOANNA.

Harriet Noyes to Mary Mead

Putney, August 3, 1835.

Dear Sister:—We hear by the way of Claremont, that Mrs. L. G. Mead *attended a ball*—a capital example of Perfectionism!—and that you said, furthermore, "that once you wouldn't have done it, but a *Perfectionist* might do anything." So you see that, though you live over the river and nine miles off, you cannot escape the breath of Putney slander.

Joanna to the Family at Putney

New Haven, October 5, 1835.

My dear Friends:—I cannot realize that I have so recently seen you. My visit at home seems like a dream, and I can remember scarcely anything about it. It was so hurried, I do not wonder. Besides, you know, I had only eyes and ears and mouth for my precious husband, and hardly a thought to bestow upon anybody or anything else. *He is gone* now, and I am beginning to look around to see where I am, and what I can find to supply his place. Alas! I am ready to say: "Ye have taken away my idols, and what have I left?" I now begin to think it would be very pleasant to go home and make a visit; not for the sake of the journey, nor to just look at you and off, but to go and sit down, and talk, and inquire into all your affairs, and tell you all mine. . . .

I remember with some regret the lectures I gave the girls. Poor Charlotte! I fear she will never forgive me, but I meant well. I could not bear to think that you were wasting your youth and talents, and cramping your geniuses in such a way. I do really think you would be more happy, and more useful, and more likely to subserve the end of your being, if you were to mingle more with society and cultivate and exercise social feelings. Instead of studying and thinking constantly upon doctrines and speculating upon human nature, you should try to make yourselves agreeable, and others happy; and do good to every one you meet, not merely by teaching them the way to heaven, but by showing them kindness and attention and by meet-

ing their offers of friendship with a hearty return. I say that you may love every one, if you will, and you will be the happier and better for it. Do you not think just as I do about this? I know you do, so now do begin to put in practice what you are so well convinced is true. I fear you will not, if you remain in Putney. It is hard to turn over a new leaf like this there. I thought at one time that I should commence housekeeping before long, and should have one or both of you with me a while, but I have pretty much given up the idea of it now until Samuel returns. . . . I wish in the meantime that you would go somewhere to school. Why not? Do not think that it will be of no advantage to you. It certainly will. Why not go to Hartford? Belinda loves the school there; so would you. Papa will let you go, if you wish. You would form some pleasant acquaintances, and would enjoy yourselves better than to stay at home. Go, and break away from all your bad habits of shutting yourselves up. Forget Putney and Putney folks and all the stories for the time. Learn to love everybody, and to please, and when you come back you will look upon everything with a different eye from what you do now.

I have written on just as the thoughts occurred to me. I suppose you will all laugh, but I am willing, if you will do as I wish to have you.

I have neither seen nor heard anything of John. Cannot think why he does not call, if he comes in town. We were good friends when I saw him last.

Yours affectionately,

J. Noyes Hayes.

Reminiscenses of Charlotte Noyes Written in 1873

The summer of 1836 opened with many unfavorable omens to the cause of Perfectionism. Boyle, Dutton and other leading spirits were as widely separated from each other as from John. Antislavery and other reforms absorbed what little enthusiasm they had left. In our family the same purpose to divide and scatter, if possible, was at work. An older sister Joanna, whose husband was in the West Indies, spent several months at home. She was a woman of great decision and strength of character—very attractive, and much beloved by us all. Naturally she was much interested in the education and prospects of her younger brothers and sisters. Though a church member her tastes and ambition led her toward worldly success. She saw and felt instinctively that John's influence over us was to lead us away from the world, and make us unfashionable, as he was. This, seen from her point of view, was to make life a failure. In May I was sent to a boarding-school in Hartford, and George's preparation for college was urged forward. Joanna took Harriet with her to Saratoga for a three weeks' visit. For the time being it looked as if we should all drift away with the tide.

Charlotte to Horatio

Miss Draper's Seminary,
Hartford, May 15, 1836.

Dear Brother Horatio:—I thank you a thousand times for your letter, the more for its being unexpected. . . . Many important events were crowded

into last week. Elizabeth's departure for the far west, and your setting out in the world for yourself, and John and all—made me anxious to hear. . . .

I had a very pleasant ride indeed to Hartford. . . . We arrived about eight in the evening, and I found to my great joy that Miss Draper could accommodate me. . . . I find all the boarders pleasant, and like the rules and regulations very much. I think, all things considered, that by keeping "a stiff upper lip" (as you used to say when we were in Boston) and a little philosophy to help I shall pass the summer pleasantly, and perhaps profitably. Now do give me one of your admirable orations, divided into twenty heads and fifty good reasons, comprising all the good advice and sage maxims you can think of. I suppose it will be comparatively tame on paper. I shall lose those *significant looks,* and *emphatic pauses,* that used to make us all laugh so at home. . . .

I like living in a city very much. Don't you? I imagine there is a smile of contempt on your face at the mention of Hartford, when you are in New York.

Have you got Harriet those illustrations of "Gray's Elegy" that she wished? How do you think she enjoys herself? I imagine she is not obliged to retire to the garret for solitude *now.* . . .

Here I am writing to you with all the calmness in the world, while Miss Gregory and two other girls are in my room actually crying for home! You may think me proof, if I can resist the contagion. . . .

Your affectionate sister,

CHARLOTTE.

Harriet to Horatio

Putney, July 1836.

Dear Brother Horatio:—To quote the venerable Mrs. Dorothy: "The first tellers of unwelcome news have but a losing office"; vice versa, I hope for a *gaining* one. Won't it please you (that is all the gain I wish) to hear from Elizabeth, and her family, and her country? A letter is now before me, the address in her own handwriting, the postmark "Kalamazoo, Michigan Territory." As you cannot see the original, I will send you an epitome.

She commences with their leaving Galway. They were detained there by the rainy weather and consequent bad roads three weeks. On the 5th of June everything was ready, and they started upon their long journey. Through the State of New York they found beautiful country and flourishing towns. They passed part of a day in Buffalo, and crossed the river at Black Rock into Canada. Here the roads were almost impassable, and everything unpleasant. When she arrived at Detroit, she says, she felt once more at home, comparatively; and here she echoes the universal burst of admiration and delight on seeing the country—the *soil* —the *wheat.*

They reached Kalamazoo the 6th of July. Though they were often very much fatigued, the journey on the whole was beneficial to their health. . . . She says she was often reminded on her way of what Grandmother told her, that "she would have such a fatiguing journey, she would never wish to come back." "Indeed," she adds, "I sometimes felt so, but on getting rested I think it not so improbable, particularly

if there should be a railroad from this part of the country to Detroit."

Now I leave you, Horatio, to make your own comments and amplifications. There are a thousand interesting points, and none more so than the debt of gratitude we owe to Him, who has exceeded our anticipations and oh, vastly our desserts.

A gentleman called here last week, Mr. Patten. brother-in-law of Chauncey Dutton. . . . He reminded me of Lovett. Such a coincidence as there is in the character and feelings of all the Perfectionists cannot be accounted for on infidel principles. If God has a people on the earth, I believe they are that people. . . .

Who knows but I shall be in the Empire State next Sabbath as well as you! In as noisy a place as New York too. Can you guess where? What if I should go to Saratoga Springs with Joanna, as *is our intention!* You start. "What! that great, strong, bouncing girl going to the Springs!" Pish! I don't go for my health, Horatio, but because my father says I may, and I love to go about. We wish to get there *if we go,* before the great Temperance Convention the 4th of August. That will give us an opportunity of seeing great and good men, that we could seldom find. We shall stay a fortnight probably, *if we go.* . . . Perhaps we shall not go. We must not say, "Tomorrow we will do such or such a thing," but, "If the Lord will."

. . .

I have been reading Paulding's "Life of Washington," and have finished "Tapnet." That is an anomaly in novels, because we could not guess the end from the beginning or even the middle of the book. . . . I don't

approve of reading novels though—more especially when one has weak eyes, and none to read—and is thoughtless enough naturally.

George's school is done. He thought Mr. Wilder the perfection of a teacher. . . .

Now I must say adieu. Be a good boy, and believe me still

Your loving sister,
H. H. Noyes.

Harriet to Charlotte

Putney, August 19, 1836.

My dear, dear Sister:—How can I tell you what we have just heard from our dear sister Elizabeth! Yesterday morning we received a letter from her, written with trembling hand and tearful eyes, after just returning from the last sad ceremonies paid to her darling baby. Our dear little Theodore is dead. Can you believe it? . . . Poor Elizabeth? Her heart is almost broken. She says: "I try not to grieve, but can a mother forget? He was just beginning to creep, and was every way lovely and promising." Only to think she was all alone from the time he was taken until the day he died—that is, without her husband to sustain her, or a brother or sister. What a heavy stroke for her, weak, and far away from home! But it was God who gave, and his kindness may be even greater in taking away. She says she means to seek the Lord with a whole heart, and receive an assurance of her salvation, for nothing else can support in affliction like hers. . . . Dr. Ransom feels the loss deeply. He idolized the babe, and "thought he could keep him

as long as he pleased, but God had other plans." He says that Michigan will do for men, but is no place for women and children. Elizabeth however says she does not feel as if their going there was the occasion of this. She thinks it very healthy, and the country very alluring to men of enterprise. But she says too, she *never* could be reconciled to going there; that their privations and hardships were too many.*

Would you like an account of our journey to Saratoga Springs? Let me look over my journal.

We were absent three weeks. George carried us to Fayetteville, where we took the western stage. . . . Highland Hall, our final depot, is situated in a retired, romantic spot, out of the village, and every way agreeable to ladies without protectors. Though Union and Congress Halls looked gayer and showier—had more of the pomp and glitter of pleasure—we concluded we were the happiest there. The board was five dollars per week; the house and table faultless. There were between thirty and forty boarders, all without exception pleasant—some fashionable. Most of them were pious, intelligent, rational people.

The great National Temperance Society held its convention while we were there. It was literally an august assembly, but I was disappointed. Indeed I was never more sensible of the weakness and insufficiency of man. We might expect at least sound reason and practical philosophy in a combination of such distinguished men, but instead of it much of the time was spent in what I thought trifling dispute and per-

* Elizabeth succumbed to the hardships of her frontier home in 1841, at the age of thirty-four.—G. W. N.

sonal allusions. However, some of the addresses were interesting. For myself I valued most the opportunity of catching a glimpse of such men as Dr. Beecher and Dr. Graham, and hearing the effusions of their giant minds.

And now I am in Locust Grove again, pursuing the usual routine of making beds and sweeping and writing family letters. . . . No sociability here, as usual, but I am satisfied; in fact it is all the pleasanter. Just to think of the thousand disagreeable things which those avoid who turn a little one side of the great Broadway of the world, hive in one comb and eat their bread alone! If the Bible is true, at last and finally Religion is the thing of importance. Heaven grant that we may not forget it, nor despise our day of grace.

Your affectionate sister,

H. H. Noyes.

John Noyes to his son Horatio (who having graduated from Yale College had recently entered upon a four months' engagement as civil engineer on Staten Island) August 31, 1836

You will readily see you must make yourself master of mathematics, especially of trigonometry. You must likewise have an accurate eye, and be thoroughly acquainted with all the instruments you have to use. Engineering no doubt will be a good business for many years to come. Those gentlemen who excell in skill, judgment, integrity and good manners will command in your business very high salaries, and will not be exposed very often in the frosty season of the year. Go on!



ELIZABETH (NOYES) RANSOM

Harriet to Horatio, August 31, 1836

I congratulate you on your prospect of promotion, though I don't exactly understand in what respect walking after with the chain is more honorable than going before with the same. . . .

What do you think of John and Perfectionism now-a-days? I hope that we shall not forget God, who is our Father and Savior. His favor is in reality worth everything else, and without it everything else will be a curse. Why don't we feel and realize this?

Joanna to Charlotte, August 31, 1836

How would you like to return to Hartford and spend the winter? If I go to New Haven in October, I shall endeavor to be in Hartford at the close of your term and take you with me to New Haven.

Charlotte to Her Father

Hartford, September 28, 1836.

Dear Father:—I am afraid you will think this a formidable-looking bill. When I look it over, I am obliged to ask myself, if I have gained anything in exchange. I know that when I came away, Mother said that she did not send me here merely to study, but to see the world, enjoy myself, etc. I have studied a good deal, and I certainly have enjoyed myself. I have formed friendships with a great many pleasant girls, whom I shall be very sorry to part with indeed.

Examination commences a week from next Thursday, and closes Monday. Tuesday morning we Vermont girls start for our own green hills. We are

anticipating our journey and its termination with a great deal of pleasure.

I think that Harriet would enjoy herself very much to spend next winter here. If it is best, I hope you will let us both come. Harriet, I shall be proud to show them a good scholar, for the fact is there are precious few here; at least I think so.

Your loving daughter,

CHARLOTTE.

CHAPTER XXVIII

RE-INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY

It was apparent to Noyes from the first that his new theory of the second coming of Christ would lead to a change of view regarding other prophecies of the Bible. During his six weeks' session with David Harrison at New Haven he had leisure to investigate this subject, and the conclusions to which he came are outlined below:

The second coming of Christ at the end of the Jewish age, and the dispensation of the fullness of times at the end of the Gentile age Noyes called "the two foci of prophecy." He found in the apocalyptic drama grouped around the former the first resurrection, the first judgment, the sealing of 144,000 from the tribes of Israel; around the latter the final resurrection, the final judgment, the complete subjection of this world to Christ, the gathering of the universal church; intervening between the two the millennium, the binding and loosing of Satan, the testimony of Christ's two witnesses. According to this view the second coming of Christ, the resurrection and judgment of the Jewish nation, the millennium are past instead of future; and the next act to come is the final resurrection and judgment of mankind.

This regrouping of prophetic events involves a change in the popular conception of the millennium.

Noyes says: "It is generally assumed that the apocalyptic 'dragon' is the exclusive representative of evil, and that during the thousand years when he was bound (that is the millennium) righteousness and peace must have reigned supreme. But these qualities during the millennium are attributed in Rev. 20: 4-6 only to the martyrs of Jesus, not to the nations of the world. 'The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.' Hence death with its train of evils was not destroyed for mankind generally. Furthermore the above assumption leaves the 'beast' out of view. In the 12th and 13th chapters of Revelation we are authorized to suppose that while the dragon was bound the beast took his place. The millennium then was the period of the supremacy of the beast; and instead of being a period of glory to the inhabiters of the earth was a period of blasphemy, war and bondage."

Noyes regarded the apocalyptic dragon, who is also called "the Devil" and "Satan," as the special representative of idolatry; hence, in his view, the "binding of Satan" symbolized the suppression of idolatry throughout Christendom during the Middle Ages. The "bottomless pit," or more correctly the "abyss" or "sea," into which Satan was cast, Noyes understood as signifying the idolatrous regions of the eastern world, against which the Mohammedans for ages constituted a barrier. Signs of the "loosing of Satan" at the end of the thousand years Noyes saw in the decay of the Mohammedan power and the reënthronement of Greek and Roman (that is Pagan) intellect at the period of the Renaissance.

The "two witnesses," whose career according to the Apocalypse occupies the whole space between the first and second judgments, Noyes found reason in the Bible to identify with Moses and Elijah. Hence, when Christ said: "I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days," Noyes understood him to mean: "I will give power to Moses and Elijah, who have been my witnesses and agents in the Jewish dispensation, and they shall continue their official work among the Gentiles for another period of 1260 years." The consequence of this theory Noyes stated thus: "The dispensation which succeeded the apostolic age was not a continuation of the dispensation introduced by Christ, but of that committed to Moses and Elijah. It has plainly borne the marks of its secondary origin. We can readily trace in it the footsteps of Moses and Elijah but not of Christ. It has upheld the righteousness of the law, and has nourished within itself the hopes of the prophets. But the righteousness of God revealed by the gospel has been wanting."

The second coming of Christ, the first focus of prophecy, Noyes had definitely charted as having taken place at the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D. The final riddle was the dating of the other focus, the dispensation of the fullness of times. In attempting a solution of this question Noyes, like William Miller and Bible commentators generally, based his calculation of the duration of the "times of the Gentiles" on Daniel's famous number, 2300 days (or years); but unlike them he found the starting-point of Daniel's number not at a date which was

involved in the uncertainties of early Jewish chronology, but at a date determined by reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, the chronological position of which was definitely known. His argument in brief was this:

Jeremiah had named only seventy years for the desolation of Israel. (Jer. 25: 11.) It was in view of the unexpected prolongation of the sufferings of the Jews to 2300 years, that Daniel "fainted, and was sick certain days." Gabriel, who was commissioned to explain this mystery, said to Daniel (Dan. 9: 24): "Seventy weeks, [or 490 years] are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Here is a much smaller number than that which so astonished Daniel in the first vision. Gabriel's explanation amounts to this: Though the Gentiles shall have dominion over the Jews for 2300 years, yet the grand object of the Jewish dispensation—the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of everlasting righteousness—shall take place within 490 years.

We have then two periods, 2300 years and 490 years, both starting from the same point, the first extending beyond our knowledge, the second terminating near the Christian era. Now if we can ascertain the date of the termination of this last period, we can reckon back and so find the date of the starting-point of both. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy

people, and upon thy holy city." The objects, for the accomplishment of which this period is assigned, are evidently not merely the coming or the death of the Messiah, but the completion of the Jewish dispensation, including the finishing of the Scriptures, the fulfillment of the new covenant "with many," the final cessation of the daily sacrifice, and the destruction of Jerusalem. (Dan. 9: 24, 26, 27.) Thus from data furnished by the Bible we are obliged to affirm that the starting-point of Daniel's 2300 years was 490 years before the destruction of Jerusalem, or 420 years before the Christian era. Taking 420 from 2300 we have 1880 as the period when the sanctuary shall be cleansed, and the desolation of the Jews cease; which is the end of the times of the Gentiles—the day of final judgment.*

* It is a singular coincidence that the Oneida Community, which Noyes regarded as a "sortie or raid from the kingdom of God" introductory to the actual establishment of that kingdom on the earth, came to an end in 1880.—G. W. N.

CHAPTER XXIX

REPUDIATION OF FORMER LEADERS

Confession of Religious Experience

As I have said that the summer and fall of 1836 was the turning-point of Dutton's career, so I may say that it was the turning-point of my own and of the cause of holiness. It was the time when Boyle's administration came to a close, and when I began to act independently of my former associates and to take the place which I have since occupied. I commenced the war on "false brethren" and "false apostles" while at Newark by writing to Charles H. Weld a letter of renunciation. This was in effect a rending of all my previous attachments. Thenceforth my longing for friends looked forwards instead of backwards. The old set was broken up, and my hopes turned toward a new set to be gained on new principles.

Noyes to Charles H. Weld

Newark, N. J., September 1836.

To Charles H. Weld:—

Our relations to each other during two or three years past have been apparently those of sincere Christian affection. On my own part the appearance corresponded to the reality until a little more than a year ago. The events of that period forced upon me the conviction that you were an enemy in disguise. Yet I

was not disposed to utter this conviction publicly, until every shadow of doubt had passed away. I have since had full leisure and opportunity to analyze your character. The darkness is past, and I am now prepared not only to assert but to prove to you and to all men, that you are "a child of the devil, an enemy of all righteousness."

To the end that our relations henceforth may be in appearance what they are in reality, I send you the following statement of facts. Let God and your own conscience be the judges of its truth.

By your own confession it appears that previous to our acquaintance you had suffered under the severest rebuke of God for drawing back from his call. Yet you had found a way to the highest seat in the spiritual synagogue, and could boast of paternal supremacy over such men as Finney, Boyle, Lansing and Theodore D. Weld. Without holiness and without a commission from the Most High you had assumed lordship over God's heritage; and when at length the doctrine of holiness was developed and the power of the Most High was manifested within your dominions, you were ready to take charge of its operations and make it a stepping-stone to a still higher advancement. At first I was too simple to match your subtleties, and for a season submitted to your assumption of paternal oversight, suffering you in a measure to check the boldness of my testimony. At length however I asserted the liberty of the Holy Ghost, and you were cast down from your throne into the horrors of the nethermost hell. I looked for a good result. But behold! You came up from the pit not with the sub-

dued penitence of a rebuked sinner, but with the dignity of a savior suffering for the sins of the world! You had won the laurels of the Lamb of God, and thenceforth your title to the throne of universal dominion was in your own imagination fully established. Unskilled as I was in the devices of Satan I gave place to your pretensions, and fell back into the place of a John the Baptist to you. Soon however my eyes were opened. During my sufferings in New York the snare was broken, and since then I have clearly seen the envious emulation of your spirit. Still I could not condemn you altogether, but hoped for your redemption. In the spring of 1835 you visited me at Putney, and I received you as a brother. At our first interview you confessed that an unsubdued devil was within you, and predicted your subsequent rebuke. The truth of your confession was soon manifest in the disguised yet perceptible chagrin of your spirit, when I refused to join you in your fanciful schemes of self-exaltation. From that time a war of wills commenced between us. God is my witness, that in that death-struggle I fought not for supremacy but for liberty. At length God gave me the victory at New Haven by smiting you with a second curse. Again you came up from hell a savior and a conqueror. I was not deceived the second time in respect to the nature of your sufferings. I knew with certainty that you suffered not for righteousness' sake but for cruelly oppressing a righteous man. Thus I was compelled to give you up as a reprobate and to scrutinize you as an adversary. I soon perceived that from the beginning your confession of Christ had been only a forced and

formal lip-service, submitted to for selfish purposes, as was also your confession of my relative standing. The proofs of your hypocrisy have since been constantly accumulating, until now I can no longer shrink from believing and declaring you to be in very deed and beyond hope according to your own confession a *prince of devils.*

God, who pleadeth the cause of his people, now says to me: "Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again. But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over." If your will had been done, I should have been the bridge by which you and all the unclean in this world and in hell would have passed over into the Holy City, for the doctrine of universal salvation was evidently the ground of your own hope. But God will ere long remove from your mind as he has from mine every vestige of such a hope. You must drink the cup you have given me, and that eternally. I have suffered personally more by the cruelty of your benevolence than by all other causes together; and the way of truth has been evil spoken of more by reason of the perverse things which have come in through you than for all other reasons. For God's sake therefore and for his elect's sake I will lay bare your nakedness till you receive your full portion of everlasting shame and contempt. In conclusion, be it known to you, that in deceiving me you have deceived yourself; in murdering me you have

murdered yourself. By delusion you have driven me into certainty; by bondage you have driven me into liberty; by damnation you have driven me into heaven.

JOHN H. NOYES.

Character of Charles H. Weld: Home-talk by Noyes, December 1850

It is difficult to lay the finger on perverse things in Weld's character that are open to superficial observation. His outward conduct was inoffensive. But he was a bad man—a very dangerous man—and all the worse for being a wolf in sheep's clothing.

There are three different motives of human action: the motive of fear, the motive of attraction to the things we are about, and the motive of attraction to a superior will, the will of God. New Haven Perfectionism started as a development of the third type of motive, that of attraction to the will of God. But after a while a spirit came in, which put in the place of attraction to the will of God a mere antinomian reference to inclination. It taught that whatever one is attracted to is the will of God. It opened the door for a complete riot of the imagination, and became the essence of pleasure-seeking. Charles H. Weld more than any other man brought this spirit into Perfectionism. He was extremely prudent, but wherever he thought it safe he insinuated sensual ideas about the kingdom of God. He uncovered enough in his conversations with me to make it certain that those were the primary ideas in his mind and that holiness was entirely secondary.

Then Weld by his undiscriminating benevolence brought Perfectionism into a variety of false fellowships. Instead of attending to the development of new truth that was going on at New Haven, he was all the time trying to hitch us on to some who had gone before and bring about a union in an unchaste way. He got into rapport with Latourette, the leader of legal Perfectionism, and introduced me to him as one of the heads of the cause. I commenced war on Latourette at once, but Weld's spiritual connection with him gave Latourette the run of the whole field and reduced all to a common level. Again it was Weld more than any one else who brought Gates with all his evil influences upon us. He was the first man among us who visited Gates, and his favorable report gave great currency to Gates's false prophecies and anti-organization views. He inoculated all of us with Gates's puttering attention to little signs and omens—devil's providences they might be called. This spirit gave me unspeakable torment, and it was months before I was entirely cured. Weld's tendency to helter-skelter running together with all who profess to be spiritual has been a great handicap to the cause, which we have had to work out of by the hardest.

His inordinate desire for preëminence I have sufficiently described in my *Confession of Religious Experience*. Others whom he touched and magnetized broke out with this same disease, and Mrs. Carrington, his only convert so far as I know, was the clearest specimen of inflated egotism we ever had among us.

Another characteristic of Weld was ineffectiveness of thought. His intellect was over-subtle and adapted

to make fog on any subject. He would admit the truth, but admit with it a thousand suppositions and doubts. Hence he never had in his mind clear principles which could be put to use.

Weld was also a marked example of imbecility of will. He was all the time like a person dreaming. A person who loves God and the central principles of the universe is in the waking state; to him spiritual things are realities, clear matters of fact. He not only perceives and delights in them, but lays hold of them, and they of him, so that he becomes identified with them and acts from them. Weld, on the other hand, though he perceived and delighted in the same things, did it in a dreamy way. Before he could get into action a collapse came on. Take for instance the declaration, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you." That to me is an everyday reality. I fling myself on it at all hazards. Charles H. Weld saw that truth as plainly as I do, and could talk about it; but when anything was to be done to prove his faith in it, he collapsed.

The fact will be found when searched out, that Charles H. Weld was the head of antinomian Perfectionism—of sensual, imaginative Perfectionism—of the spirit that abandons all law, and professes to submit to God, but in reality submits to the devil, and then sinks down into folly, apostasy and death.

The alienation of Boyle commenced at the time of Noyes's conflict with Charles H. Weld in the summer of 1835. "Looking only on the outward appearance,"

wrote Noyes, "Boyle understood not the warfare in which I was engaged, and was offended at the apparent mysticism and fanaticism which attended it. The circumstances in which I was placed rapidly developed to my view many new and strange principles of spiritual philosophy; and, as is generally the case with beginners, the language in which I spoke of them to others was probably not very lucid. Boyle took up the cudgels against the new spiritual principles. He denounced openly my 'eternal spinning,' as he called my progress in spiritual novelties. He hung up in his room a card enumerating the 'doctrines of devils' against which he protested. I only remember one of them, 'the fellowship of spirits.' At my first arrival in New Haven I had prepared an article entitled *What We Believe,* which Boyle willingly published in the Extra. But afterward he gave out word that he wanted no more of my contributions. He whipped me in the paper as hard as he could without calling my name, and his hostile influence among the believers left me from this time forward but little foothold in New Haven."

The alienation thus commenced was carried further in the fall of 1835 by the Gates-Boyle attack on Paul. Noyes always felt that his relation to Paul was peculiarly close, and this attack affected him deeply. Indeed he dated his abandonment of "Boyleism" from the time of the publication of Boyle's charges against Paul.

Finally a complete rupture was brought about by Noyes's renunciation letter to Charles H. Weld. Boyle dissented strongly from Noyes's judgment of Weld,

and tried to persuade him to take a different attitude. Finding that Noyes was immovable, Boyle at last in an interview at the home of Abram C. Smith declared "everlasting separation." Noyes replied, "Amen."

For more than three years, while Noyes was without means of publishing, the Gates-Boyle attack on Paul remained unchallenged in print; but after Noyes had established a press of his own, he published a rejoinder, from which the following is an extract:

The two foremost assertions of original New Haven Perfectionism were first, that perfect and perpetual holiness is the only standard of true Christianity, and second, that the apostle Paul was a living example of such holiness. Take away these assertions with their antecedents and consequences, and New Haven Perfectionism has neither soul nor body—is but the name of a nonentity. And yet it is true, though it is nearly incredible, that T. R. Gates, the most naked and presumptuous of all impugners of these assertions, was not only recognized as a Christian brother for a long time by Weld and Boyle, but was actually suffered to assume over them the office of spiritual leader.

And indeed the shepherds who let (or rather brought) the wolf into the fold did not even put him to the trouble of disguising himself with sheep's clothing. With the full means of knowing that Gates openly rejected the most essential doctrines of Perfectionism Boyle advertised *The Reformer and Christian* as a publication "eminently designed to do good," and thenceforward gave to the writings of Gates the larg-

est place in *The Perfectionist.* Thus emboldened and invited Gates was not backward in availing himself of the privilege of peaceably putting an end to the troublesome doctrine of perfect holiness by making *The Perfectionist* itself the medium of its own refutation. In November 1835 he ceased publishing *The Reformer and Christian,* and after highly commending *The Perfectionist* as a sufficient substitute for his own publications he announced that in future he should communicate his views through that paper. Accordingly in the next number of *The Perfectionist* the leading article is from his pen; and the leading object of that article is to prove that the Lord's apostles, especially Paul, had not "attained to righteousness"—had not "entered in by the door"—"were in a measure thieves and robbers!" As a corollary to this he insinuates as boldly as he dares, that none have yet attained to righteousness, and of course that Perfectionists in their professions of holiness are either fools or impostors. And all this passed with Boyle for good orthodox Perfectionism.

I cannot but believe that this is an instance of imposture and effrontery on the one side and of credulity and tergiversation on the other wholly unprecedented in the annals of religious iniquity and folly.

In the latter part of February 1837 Abram C. Smith wrote to Noyes:

"I received a letter from Latourette last week. He saith my great sin is to have some other arm besides the Lord's to lean upon. He saith farther that he is hid from those flesh-pots and slime-pits who call themselves Perfectionists; and if I do not take heed, God

will remove me as with a stroke, as he did Absalom the fool."

About a month later, while Noyes was sojourning in the vicinity of New York, he wrote to Latourette recounting the circumstances of their first meeting,* and added:

"I saw the crooked character of your mind in this affair at the time; yet I did not condemn you, but have since been waiting for the proof of you. . . . If you can clear yourself of these charges, I shall most gladly greet you as a brother. If you kick against the pricks, I shall expose and overthrow you, though you carry a spear like a weaver's beam, and defy the armies of the living God with the voice of a Goliath."

Latourette to Noyes

New York, April 5, 1837.

My dear young man:—

I received your letter, and was quite pleased to see how you handled my old man.

I am hid with Christ in the *Rock,* or in the *Law of God.* . . . I have much to mourn for, and lament that we are such poor and feeble and ignorant creatures by nature; and without the *sweet* grace of God we are not able to do any good acts nor think a good thought.

Relative to your letter I can say, *You do say rightly. You do not know me.* And you may strive to know me and never know me, until you are dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God—alive to thy duty to society in aiding in earning bread, temporal and spiritual, and clothing, spiritual and temporal. . . .

* See pp. 133-134.

Now why is it that you do not fellowship me? Is it because I have not got a good spirit of love, truth and faith in my blessed Lord and Master? I will tell thee, my brother:

Thou art not yet in the inner court, and have not been called there; and as Hagar to Sarah, and Ishmael to Isaac, so your spirit has treated me. . . .

Now let me say unto thee, my dear young man, God our Father is not dependent upon us, and yet we are dependent entirely upon him.

You have, no doubt, many views of the beauties of King Solomon; so had his concubines; so had Hagar of Abraham's honors, yet none of these were married wives.

I can recommend thee to seek to know the Shepherd's voice, and then be wise, and not be led by a stranger. . . .

I perceive thy letter is written from the left hand, hence you know me not, nor do you yet know your right from your left.

I am the servant to servants, surnamed

ISRAEL.

Noyes to Latourette

New York, April 5, 1837.

To James Latourette:—

The meaning of your letter stripped of its sheep's clothing is simply this: *"Your charges are false, and not worthy of a reply. You are a young man; you do not know your right hand from your left; you are not dead to sin; you know not God nor me; you are too idle to get your living."* On the second page of

my letter you will find the following words: "If you are one of those who say they are apostles, and are not, but do lie, you will probably deny the facts I have stated, and rebut the plainness of speech, with which I shall further prove you, by retort and reviling." You intended to evade the test, but you have so exactly fulfilled my prediction, that my course is made plain. "Thanks be unto God, who taketh the wise in their own craftiness."

J. H. Noyes.

"After this correspondence," says Noyes, "I had an interview with Latourette, in which he claimed the credit of having caused my sufferings by 'delivering me to Satan for the destruction of the flesh,' and attempted to frighten me into subjection by relating instances of the swift perdition of his opposers. In reply I charged upon him before God and men the crime of spiritual tyranny, and declared myself in relation to such slaveholders an abolitionist."

CHAPTER XXX

NOYES ASSERTS HIS DIVINE COMMISSION

Abram C. Smith to Noyes

Newark, N. J., January 4, 1837.

Dear Brother:—. . . I have received a letter from Brother Newberry of New Haven. He desired to know where you were. I have no doubt the sons of God would be glad to hear from you at this time, as you were the first that came out in the faith. "As for this Moses, we wot not what is become of him," they may say, if they are not established in the faith. So, my dear John, be quick to hear what God shall say unto thee, or his church.

Your Brother,

ABRAM C. SMITH.

David Harrison to Noyes

Meriden, Conn., January 13, 1837.

Dear Brother Noyes:—. . . Waiting on God, and acting in obedience to the leadings of his spirit is with me a practical matter. It is my business, and my whole business. Though I have been out of work for some days, I have been busy in watching the motion of the needle. If you know of fifty dollars that can be had, or of any business that is appropriate, I should like to hear from you.

Yours in the gospel of Jesus Christ,

DAVID HARRISON.

Noyes to David Harrison

Putney, January 15, 1837.

Dear Brother:—"Though the vision tarry long, wait for it; it will come." I need not tell you why I have delayed writing so long, and why I am yet in the same circumstances as when we were together, save that I am out of debt. You understand the seeming coquetry of our Beloved, and know the terms on which I trust Him. I thank God that I have the same confidence for you as for myself.

After we parted I went to New York with a view to finding employment or the means in some way of refunding the money borrowed at New Haven and of assisting you. I was led, however, to Newark, and compelled (you know how) to spend several months with Brother Smith, pursuing the same train of thought and discussion which I commenced with you. Many times I inquired of the Lord if I might not go to work, or write to you, and as often the answer was: "Be quiet; he that believeth shall not make haste." I came to this place in November, and am wintering at my father's on such terms as you may suppose must exist between me and an unbeliever, receiving friendly treatment as a man but not known as a son of God and a brother of the saints.

On receipt of your letter I made inquiries of a machinist in this place, who is also a disciple, concerning employment for you. He thinks he will be in a condition to employ several persons in the spring, but not at present. There is an augur factory in Chesterfield, a town adjoining this, but I have had no opportunity of learning their occasions for work. I sent a

statement of your case to Brother Smith. Perhaps you will hear from him. But all this is uncertain help. You will be delivered in due time by Him who gave us the fourpences. I have fully discerned the beauty and drunk the spirit of Habakkuk's resolution: "Though the fig-tree do not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vines; though the labor of the olive fail, and the field yield no meat; though the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stall; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Yea, brother, I will rejoice in the Lord; though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him.

The present winter is doubtless a time of sore tribulation to many. I see the saints "laying off and on" like the distressed ships at the entrance of New York harbor waiting for pilots; and I would advise them all, if I could, to make a bold push and "run in" at all events. For one I have passed the Hook. My soul is moored with an anchor sure and steadfast, the anchor of Hope; and I am willing to do what I can as a pilot to others. Yea, I will lay down my life for the brethren, and God has made me "mighty to save." But, you know, a pilot must have the helm, and I find few who are willing to give their vessels into the hands of such a stripling. And I desire not that they should, until that stripling is manifestly declared to be the right hand of the Son of God. As necessity is the mother of invention, so it is the mother of faith. I therefore rejoice in the necessity which will ere long work full confidence in God—such confidence as will permit him to save his people "in a way they have not known."

In the meantime my faith is growing exceedingly. I know that the things of which we communed at New Haven will be accomplished. Of the times and seasons I know nothing. During my residence at Newark my heart and mind were greatly enlarged. I had full license to investigate the prophecies, and came to many conclusions of like importance to those which interested us at New Haven. The substance of all is, that God is about to set a great white throne on his footstool, and heaven and earth, that is, all spiritual and political dynasties, will flee away from the face of him who shall sit thereon. The second resurrection and the second judgment are at the door. The righteous will be separated from the wicked by the opening of the books and the testimony of the saints. "The house of Jacob shall become a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau shall be for stubble. Saviors shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's." Between this present time and the establishment of God's kingdom over the earth lies a chaos of confusion, tribulation and war such as must attend the destruction of the fashion of this world and the introduction of the will of God as it is done in heaven. God has set me to cast up a highway across this chaos, and I am gathering out the stones and grading the track as fast as possible. For the present a long race and a hard warfare is before the saints, that is, an opportunity and demand for faith, one of the most precious commodities of heaven. Only let us lay fast hold of the hope of our calling, let us set the Lord and his glory always before our face, and we shall not be moved.

I thank God that you have "fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions," to the end that you may rest in the day of trouble; for I say to you before God that, "though I be weak in Christ, I know I shall live by the power of God" toward you and all saints. I am holden up by the strength that is needed to sustain not my weight only (for I am but a handle) but the weight of all who shall come after me. I would that you knew the exceeding greatness of the power which through me is searching the bowels of the whole world. You will know it in due time. All flesh shall know that the Holy One of Israel is my redeemer. Till then I must seem to bear witness of myself. . . .

Write, if you wish to hear from me.

Yours in the Lord,

J. H. Noyes.

CHAPTER XXXI

COMMENCEMENT OF THE PUTNEY BIBLE SCHOOL

Confession of Religious Experience

I returned from Newark to Putney in November 1836, and remained at my father's during the following winter. At this time I commenced in earnest the enterprise of repairing the disasters of Perfectionism, and establishing it on a permanent foundation; not by preaching and stirring up excitement over a large field, as we had done at the beginning, nor by laboring to reorganize and discipline broken and corrupted regiments, as I had done at Prospect, but by devoting myself to the patient instruction of a few simple-minded, unpretending believers chiefly belonging to my father's family. I had now come to regard the quality of the proselytes of holiness as more important than their quantity; and the quality which I preferred was not that meteoric brightness which I had so often seen miserably extinguished, but sober and even timid honesty. This I found in the little circle of believers at Putney; and the Bible school, which I commenced among them in the winter of 1836-7, proved to be to me and to the cause of holiness the beginning of better days.

Reminiscences of Noyes's Sister Charlotte

Late in the fall of 1836 John returned to Putney.

Mother was a frequent invalid at this time, and kept her chamber. In her room John felt most at home. The Bible was always her favorite study, and her interest in true religious experience was never cold. I do not know exactly how it commenced, but soon my sister Harriet began to spend her evenings in Mother's room, listening and reading with them. Her whole soul was hungry for salvation, for an experimental acquaintance with God. While she was thus pressing forward, she had one great drawback: it was the thought that she must leave me behind. If I continued indifferent, she and I, who had been inseparable from childhood, must here part. To give me up cost her many tears. How did I know it? Nothing had been said to me of her struggles, but I felt in my heart that Harriet had left me, that she had set out in earnest to be religious. This broke up my indifference. My heart melted toward God. I must go with her. She had opened the way, and I would follow with all my heart. I joined her in spending all my leisure time in that "upper chamber." George came too. This was the beginning of a new era in our family. John commenced his "home-talks" there with Mother, Harriet, George and me for listeners. It was a revival on a small scale that lasted all winter. We studied the Bible in a practical, self-applying way. The truth that had before been held as a theory was laid to heart. John watched the process of conviction, and warned, exhorted and encouraged us, and led us along step by step.

It required more courage at that time to profess salvation from sin than it does now. Harriet, George and I, though called Perfectionists, had never made

such a profession. In February 1837 we all made a public profession in this way: George, who was fourteen years old, was attending the district school, and one morning after the teacher and scholars were all seated he rose and confessed his belief in Christ as a Savior from sin. A discussion followed, in which George had the whole school against him except one girl. The same evening Harriet and I called upon a near neighbor, who, though a church member, was the most notorious newsmonger in the village. We told her we believed that Christ came to save his people from their sins, and we believed that he had saved us. She was loud and voluble in her opposition, and her husband (not a church member) said with solemn emphasis: "They are joined to their idols; let them alone!" But we went home light-hearted, knowing that now our confession would go as far and fast as tongue could carry it, and believing it true that Christ would confess us.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Mrs. Crawford, November 1836

John is much the same. Sometimes I think he has perhaps done all his work in the way of preaching; at others I think he will preach the everlasting gospel with a power greater than anything he has yet done. I have some interesting conversation with him, but my long discipline only proves that like the law he can enlighten and condemn, but cannot give peace to the troubled mind nor renew and purify the heart.

Mrs. Crawford to Noyes, January 1837

If you think it best, will you not with your disciples



CHARLOTTE (NOYES) MILLER

at home come here this evening? I feel desirous to make it my whole business at present to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. How far is it right for me to look to you for instruction? I am at present in a critical spot—it seems to me, if there is such a thing, neither a believer nor an unbeliever. I am willing to be tried by close questioning and rebuking, that I may know the worst of my state, and be led to seek refuge only in God.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Mrs. Crawford

Putney, January 1837.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—In consequence of some things that were said and feelings that were excited at our late interview I think I am led to write to you, and sketch down some of the operations through which God has been pleased to make me pass since.

The manner and power, with which John spoke to me and produced such a sensation in all, I believe, who were present, were but a small specimen of what I have been through quite a number of times both last winter and this. It was the distress and conflict which he saw the necessity of my case required, and the feelings of nature and flesh, that so preyed upon his spirits last winter and at last made him quit and run away. For myself I would be like "a bird shot down," with scarcely the breath of life in me sometimes for a day or two, and then by the subsequent seeking for help from God come to a better spirit, and we would be quite happy and in good fellowship till my puffing would require another reproof.

Last Sunday his rebuke produced in me a feeling

of despair that I had never before experienced. The last time before I thought I never could bear it again; and now I felt that nothing but the power and grace of God could help me. I felt wholly to abandon self and wholly to give myself into the hands of the Lord to do what he would with me. That night I slept well as usual, but had nothing all the next day but the same feeling of despair. "The Lord have mercy" was all that I could say. The next morning, while Mrs. P. was present, John took the occasion of something I said to reprove me sharply: told me that I was proud of many outward things about me, that almost everything I did was tinctured with vainglory, and concluded by saying that, if I did not loathe myself, he loathed and abhorred my spirit. With various conflicting feelings I had enough to do to restrain a gush of tears, but I did restrain them, for I knew in my heart that what he said was true, and that my tears were those of wounded fleshly feelings and I could and would subdue them, and still despairing of all other help look to God. John's manner and tone were such that I know Mrs. P. must have been surprised, if not shocked, and she left us so unceremoniously that I could not help thinking she was glad to get away, though I have no doubt she will think it on the whole a profitable season even for her.

The contest with my feelings was kept up all the afternoon not to think hard of John; but at length my only fears were that his feelings might retort, and he be induced to take back something. But I found I had no reason for any fears of this kind, for I knew

that the Lord was with him, and he could not do it. And indeed the firmness which he has manifested on all such occasions is to me one of the strongest evidences that he is of the Lord. "Cursed is he that doeth the Lord's work deceitfully; cursed is he that keepeth back his sword from blood," said the prophet.

In the evening John came upstairs, Morgan with him. By his manner it was plain he had some doubts whether I would receive him. He said he wished to have something more decisive, and in the presence of those there he would make some propositions to me for that purpose. (These I will give you another time.) When I told him what my feelings were toward him, he said: "That's good." We had a long and interesting talk upon things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and all were affected, and all expressed our feelings in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to God.

Mrs. Crawford to Mrs. Polly Noyes

Putney, January 1837.

Dear Mrs. Noyes:—I feel to thank you *much* for your communication to me yesterday. I was *deeply interested* in the account of your experience the past week. The rebukes you received in my presence last Sunday I took to myself. I felt that I was altogether without the wedding garment, and that I could not bear the scrutinizing gaze of the master of the feast. I feel that I need rebukes, or something more powerful than I have had, to stimulate me and to bring me

up to the point where *self* is entirely given up and Christ is all in all.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to an Anonymous Correspondent

Putney, January 10, 1837.

. . . This is the glorious gospel of the blessed God, that it brings us into a living union with the living God, makes us one with Christ and "sons of God without rebuke." That I know all this as experimentally as some do, I do not say. I have believed, and therefore have I spoken. I say to you frankly, that I believe John has received the "glorious gospel" —that a testimony has already gone forth from him, which will shake the church and the world—that God is preparing him to go forward with the testimony— and that this confession of Christ, which receives him as a Savior from sin and all evil, will be the test which will separate the righteous from the wicked. Already do I see plain indications that a separation of spirit is taking place between those who receive this doctrine and those who reject it. . . . The time, I believe, is not far distant, when Christians will not be judged by the same rule as those that have gone before. If we have more light and higher motives set before us, we must act consistently with that light. Forgetting the things that are behind we must press forward toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. . . . I know that the dearest earthly relations will be dissolved and every interest and worldly attachment converged into one common mass. Like the children of one common family the children of God will have no exclusive interests.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Mrs. Crawford

Putney, March 15, 1837.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—John left us this morning for Chesterfield. From there he expects to go to Lowell, Andover, Boston, perhaps New York. He left us with very different feelings from what he did last spring. He seems quite satisfied with his winter's work, fully believing he will see an abundant fruit of his labors. He left much in charge for the church (as he calls it here), that we hold fast our profession and truly seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness. . . .

Though I cannot yet say that I have that inward testimony, which seems and no doubt is the only thing that can give perfect peace and righteousness, yet I feel as if I were fed, as it were, day by day with the heavenly manna.

Harriet A. Holton to Mrs. Crawford

Westminster, June 15, 1837.

Dear Mrs. Crawford:—. . . I joyed to hear of Mrs. Williams, that she was still keeping her face Zionward, (I feel assured God *will* manifest himself to such, even though they wait *long*), of our friends of East Putney, that they increase with the increase of God, of John, of Mrs. Hayes, (her child-like spirit is lovely), and of yourself, dear Mrs. Crawford, although your advance may not be perceptible to you. From the very fact that it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for those who love him, it is not to be expected that at first sight we should recognize this

inheritance of which we are taking possession to be the promised land. Although we find it flowing with milk and honey, our taste had become vitiated by vain imaginations, and this simple food insipid.

If the Lord wills, I would see your face. I would be used by him as a means of exciting you to strive earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints; and for this purpose I would joyfully give you a detail of my progress in truth, or something that might be useful to Mrs. Williams. But when I attempt it, I can only say that I am becoming a *fool* in what the world calls *wisdom;* I am becoming *rude* and *savage* in what is termed *politeness* and *refinement.* I am devoid of all *feeling* in the eyes of those who love *kindred* and *friends* more than God. I am a *blasphemer* to the *Pharisee.* In short my path lies directly *across* the world's.

Yours in love,

H. A. Holton.



GEORGE W. NOYES

CHAPTER XXXII

CONVERSION OF JOANNA

This crucial winter of 1836-7 Joanna spent at Chesterfield, New Hampshire, visiting in the home of her older sister, Mary Mead. Just after Harriet, Charlotte and George made their public profession of salvation from sin she wrote the following note to her mother:

Chesterfield, February 10, 1837.

Dear Mother:—. . . I do not know when I shall be at home; perhaps sometime in March. I should like to see you all very much, but do not expect we should agree exactly in sentiment, and perhaps it is as well on the whole for all of us that I am away. I can not get much out of George. Tell Harriet I could not discover perfection in her note. I hope you are all right, but think it possible you may be deceived. . . .

Love to all. Your affectionate daughter,

JOANNA.

About the middle of March, as he was leaving home for an extended trip, Noyes went to Chesterfield and called on Mary and Joanna. Of his interview Charlotte says:

"From Mary he met no opposition, and nothing

occurred to interrupt the friendly relations existing between them. But Joanna was too independent, too proud and self-confident to conceal or suppress her displeasure at John's course. A battle-royal ensued between him and her—not a vulgar contention in words about external trifles, but a life and death struggle for mastery between the favor of God and the praise of this world—between faith and unbelief. The result was a glorious victory for faith. Joanna broke entirely down. Her pride and love of the world gave way. After a few days of deep repentance and heartfelt searching for God she came forth exceedingly happy and overflowing with the love of God. Seeing with the clear light of inspiration her union with Christ, and his righteousness hers, she exclaimed to Mother: 'You cannot think how I love myself!' The conversion of this beloved sister was a joyful surprise to us, and brought wonder and dismay to the church in Putney of which she was a member and to a large circle of worldly friends.

Soon after this Joanna returned to her home in New Haven. During the few weeks of her stay with us she gave evidence of a genuine change of spirit. She met in the circle of believers in Putney a young woman who had formerly been haughty and ambitious like herself. As leaders and rivals in society there had been something like jealousy and coldness between them. But now the power of truth had swept away their pride, and love and humility had taken its place. One of the first things Joanna did was by confession of her fault to seek and obtain reconciliation with this woman."

Noyes to Joanna

New York, May 4, 1837.

Dear Sister Joanna:—Your letter came to hand this morning, and I assure you it was more valuable to me than the money it contained, although I had just spent my last sixpence. I am persuaded that your reconciliation to the gospel of salvation from sin will finally reconcile you to my conduct; and I commend you most hopefully to God and to the word of his grace for a knowledge of the way of truth without the least concern for your views of my character. I doubt not that I am as great a wonder to myself as I am to you, and the time has been when I was ready to murmur at the Lord's dealings with me, because I understood them not. It seemed as if he had determined to make me as hateful as possible in the eyes of the world. My best apology for the offense I have given you and others is this: During the past three years I have not been my own master. The God, whose I am and whom I serve, is the proper respondent to every accusation against me. To me he has fully justified himself in respect to my works, and in due time I know he will satisfy every honest mind. I cannot now attempt a vindication of myself, for a big book would not suffice for such an undertaking. I will only say that in my own consciousness I am the reverse of a false prophet, a sheep in wolf's clothing.

Joanna, I love your masculine, independent temperament; only give it full scope by setting the whole world at naught for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and you and I will yet be happy together. But oh, beware of pride, self-will, independence in

respect to God! Be a giant against the world, but be a new-born babe toward God. If you would find a secure resting-place, seek a personal and familiar acquaintance with God; not such an acquaintance as you attain with great men by history, but such as you have with your husband by daily association. To know God is eternal life. Jesus Christ has so reconciled the world unto God by assuming our nature, that we may draw nigh unto him not as serfs to an emperor but as children to a father. We approach him by a voluntary movement of our hearts, and we find him where we leave the world. If you would be the bride of Christ, you must take the lover's leap—a leap from the heights of the haughtiness of this world into the ocean of the love of God. If such a leap seems too formidable, take the testimony of one who has tried it. I tell you there is no danger and no difficulty. When the deed is done, you will wonder that you made yourself so much trouble about it. To receive and confess Christ boldly before men seems like a Sam Patch exploit; but who would not choose it rather than be driven over the Niagara of death unwillingly and in the dark?

Yours truly,

J. H. Noyes.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Elizabeth, May 19, 1837

I think there is an increasing interest here, especially in the family. Joanna has written to John. Her views are perfectly congenial with his. . . . In a meeting last evening at Lydia's Mr. Morgan said it seemed to him perfectly absurd that he should ever commit

another sin. So said Lydia; and Joanna and myself say the same.

Lydia Campbell to Harriet A. Holton

Putney, May 25, 1837.

Dear Harriet:—"There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." I have lately experienced something of this joy. A week ago this evening some dear friends spent an hour or two with me, among whom was Mrs. Hayes.* She appeared to be very desirous of learning the truth, and very teachable. The Lord gave me strength to communicate with her as I had never done with any one before. I felt that she would soon be delivered from bondage, and for two or three days I was filled with such joy that I did not know what it meant. On Sunday evening we met at my brother James's. Mrs. Hayes came in, and confessed Christ a whole Savior, and she now testifies that she cannot sin, because she is born of God. I know not why it is, but I can see her spirit as I never have that of any other person. She is indeed lovely.

Joanna to the Family at Putney

New Haven, July 26, 1837.

My dear Friends:—If you have received Samuel's letter, it will not be necessary for me to apologize for my long silence, but you will have learned that I have been sick, and will readily excuse me. . . .

I should like to tell you something what my feelings have been during my sickness with regard to that

* That is, Joanna.—G. W. N.

one subject that interests us all so much, but do not know as it will do for me to write much more now. However this I will say, that I seem to have lost the assurance I had of my being saved from sin. I cannot feel as I did about it, though at the same time I do yet look upon the Savior as willing and able to deliver me from that cruel bondage. At times during my sickness my mind was much confused and distressed, but at others I had great peace and felt a degree of submission to the divine will and a confidence that he would do what was right and would at last save me with an everlasting salvation, such as made me very happy. I have much of this feeling now, and I believe too that I shall be led in the way of truth. . . .

I have neither seen nor heard anything of John. I hope, if you do, you will write me. I am sure he has one friend who will never leave nor forsake him. Let us comfort ourselves with that. . . .

Yours affectionately,

JOANNA HAYES.

Joanna to Mary Mead

New Haven, August 17, 1837.

Dear Sister:—. . . We have had a delightful excursion to Saratoga. . . . My health is perfectly restored. . . .

They seem to be going on from strength to strength at Putney in Perfectionism. I hardly know where I am. What are you thinking about it now? Oh, for light and guidance! . . .

Yours affectionately,

JOANNA HAYES.

Joanna to the Family at Putney

New Haven, August 21, 1837.

My dear Friends:—I hope you do not think, because I write so seldom, that I do not remember you. I assure you, if you do harbor such a thought, you are very much mistaken, for I do not know that I ever thought of you more than I have this summer, or felt a greater desire to see you and to know what you were doing and thinking. I dream about you almost every night, and often and often in imagination look in upon you, sitting in that "Prophet's chamber," reading the Bible, or conversing upon the amazing truths revealed in it, or in some other way improving the time. And do you not think I should like to join you? I should indeed, and when I think of it, the scenes in which I am engaged here lose much of their interest in comparison.

I wrote you something about my exercises when I was sick. I have felt much the same since. I cannot find within me that assurance of being free from sin that I experienced before I left home; but I do not give up the hope that I shall again feel as I did then. I *do believe* that the true children of God may attain to perfect holiness, and that some have already done so, and that the time is coming when all will. But whether we are to wait for his time or not, I do not know. It seems to me that, when the kingdom of God is come on earth, those who are sincere in their search for the truth will come out strong and unmoved by everything within and without that can assail them; that they will be upheld by the power of God and be kept in perfect peace.

I am thinking and reading a good deal, but long for more of the teaching of the Spirit. My own understanding is a blind guide, and all that I hear in New Haven seems to me foolishness. Dr. Taylor, Mr. Bacon, Mr. Ludlow, Dr. Fitch, Dr. Beman, President Nott and all the others that I have heard have lost their charms for me. They all seem to know but very little what is truth. . . .

I heard or saw nothing of John. Do you know anything about him? We stopped at the Astor House in New York, and while I was enjoying its splendors I could not but think that John might be in the city without a place to lay his head.

Love to all. Yours affectionately,

JOANNA.

In less than a month after writing this letter Joanna sailed with her husband to the West Indies. Her departure was sudden and unexpected, and the prospect of leaving her beloved home, perhaps forever, and going to live in a distant and dangerous climate caused her to look earnestly to God for direction. On the morning she sailed she opened her Bible at random, and this passage met her eye: "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." "This," said she, "is my promise!"

During the long voyage she was in fine health and spirits. Arriving at Trinidad she and her husband were happy in the prospect of living together at last in their own home. A bad fever was raging in the

Island, but she wrote to her sister, Mary Mead: "Though death reigns everywhere, I can trust God, and am mercifully kept in peace." And she added: "I think just as I did when I left about the great doctrine of Perfectionism, and could never feel satisfied to go back to the old way."

Two weeks later she wrote to her husband, who had been unexpectedly called away to Porto Rico, that she had suffered a slight attack of the fever, but was then well, or nearly so. This was on the 31st of May 1838. On the 6th of June she was stricken again, and on the 14th, before her husband could reach her, at the age of twenty-nine, she breathed her last. The night before she died she sent this message to her family at Putney: "Tell them I am perfectly resigned to the will of God in this trying hour. I know that Christ is mine, and he is precious to my soul. In the world I have had tribulation, but in him I have peace."

CHAPTER XXXIII

RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN NOYES AND THE REFORM LEADERS

About the middle of March 1837 Noyes again set forth in knight-errant style to look after the interests of the cause in other fields.

Noyes to His Mother

Newark, N. J., March 30, 1837.

Dear Mother:—The course and end of my journey were according to my expectations. . . . At Boston I called at the antislavery office, and found Garrison, Stanton, Whittier and other choice spirits warmly engaged in a dispute about political matters. I heard them quietly, and when the meeting broke up I introduced myself to Garrison. He spoke with great interest of *The Perfectionist;* said his mind was heaving on the subjects of holiness and the kingdom of heaven, and he would devote himself to them as soon as he could get antislavery off his hands. I spoke to him especially on the subject of government, and found him, as I expected, ripe for the loyalty of heaven.

In my passage from Providence to New York God gave me a view of his wonders in the mighty ocean. We started in a storm, which became so furious that we were forced to lie still at Newport six hours.



JOANNA (NOYES) HAYES

Again we put to sea with a strong gale in our teeth. Our boat, one hundred and fifty feet long, reared and pitched like an unruly horse. The people staggered about like drunken men. It was a new and appalling scene. I was neither sick nor fearful, not because I trusted in the strength of the vessel or in the skill of its managers, but because I said in my heart, "The winds and the waves, the steam and the helm are in my Father's hands. I am exposed not to the fury of the elements but to the mercy of God."

After two days' contention with the waters we arrived safely at New York. Next day I came to this place, and directly found myself again exposed to the mercy of God in a new way. A malignant attack of scarlet fever, which is at work in this place, threatened to prostrate me. While my throat was sore I took nothing but cold water in my mouth. By the faithful application of this I soon put out the fire in that quarter; then I drank milk and ate oranges and oysters, as I had an appetite. When the fever burned I soaked my feet in cold water, and when it was hottest I stripped myself and washed my whole body in cold water. So the fire was soon extinguished, and thank God I am now at the end of a week better than I was before. I walked the streets every day, though I was thin as a shadow, and pursued my studies as usual. I am glad I was not at home on this occasion, as I have reason to believe that you would have been frightened and nervous. But I shall teach you in due time to laugh at diseases and so conquer them. The same God who cured me of the pestilence shall be honored in my recovery from every blow of him that

hath the power of death, or I will die. The dead and dying are not fit to be physicians. I must have a deathless doctor or none at all. . . .

Mr. Smith is about moving his family up the North River. I shall remain with him a day or two longer, and then go where the door opens. Probably I shall remain in this region till after the May anniversaries. I am sweetly exposed to the mercy of God in respect to money matters, and shall be till the spirit of the Day of Pentecost reigns in the world. "They that wait on the Lord shall not be confounded world without end."

Finney, who has been corresponding with some of the brethren here, sent for and received the whole of *The Perfectionist*. He and Leavitt thought at first they would write against it, but concluded to let it alone.

New York is heaving on the subject of holiness and of money. As money goes down, holiness goes up. This great people among whom I circulate is full of the elements of heaven and hell. Those elements cannot long remain together. Heaven must begin on earth soon or hell will. Thanks be to God the event is not doubtful.

Write, if you please, to this place. Yours,

J. H. Noyes.

During the spring and summer of 1837 there was an unmistakable drift toward conciliation between the Perfectionists as represented by Noyes and the church and reform leaders. Noyes on his part made overtures to Gerrit Smith, and even went so far as to offer

on certain conditions to join hands with him in pushing antislavery. This plan, for some reason which Noyes afterward thought providential, fell through. On the other hand Gerrit Smith expressed lively interest in the views of the Perfectionists, and wrote to Noyes that his wife had long endorsed some of their doctrines. At the same time signs were not wanting that Garrison, Finney, the Beechers and other leaders of public opinion felt a new interest and conviction on the subject of salvation from sin.

A few days after his interview with Garrison Noyes wrote him as follows:

"You said your mind was heaving on certain momentous subjects, and you only waited to set antislavery in the sunshine before you turned your mind toward those subjects. Allow me to suggest that you will set antislavery in the sunshine only by making it tributary to holiness; and you will most assuredly throw it into the shade which now covers Colonization, if you suffer it to occupy the ground in your own mind or in others' which ought to be occupied by universal emancipation from sin. All the abhorrence which now falls upon slavery, intemperance, lewdness and every other species of vice will in due time be gathered into one volume of victorious wrath against sin. I wait for that time as for the day of battle, regarding all the previous movements as only fencing-schools or at best as the preliminary skirmishes which precede a general engagement. I counsel you and the people that are with you, if you love the post of honor, the forefront of the hottest battle of righteousness, to set your faces toward perfect holiness. Your station is

one which gives you power over the nations. Your city is on a high hill. If you plant the standard of perfect holiness where you stand, many will see and flow to it. I judge from my own experience that you will be deserted by many of your present friends; but you will be deserted as Jonah was by the whale—the world in vomiting you up will heave you upon the dry land.

J. H. Noyes."

Soon after receiving this communication Garrison read extracts from it at a public meeting in Rhode Island, and spoke favorably of its sentiments; and on October 20th, 1837, he published it in *The Liberator,* omitting only Noyes's signature. The impression made by Noyes's visit and letter may be seen in the following paragraph from a letter which Garrison wrote a few weeks later to H. C. Wright:

"I shall endeavor, *Deo volente,* to be in New York the week preceding the anniversary meeting. If we can find time, we will then freely interchange our religious views. My own are very simple, but they make havoc of all sects, and rites, and ordinances of the priesthood of every name and order. Let me utter a startling assertion in your ear. There is nothing more offensive to the religionists of the day than *practical holiness;* and the doctrine that total abstinence from sin in this life is not only commanded but necessarily obtainable they hate with a perfect hatred, and stigmatize entire freedom from sin as a delusion of the devil! Nevertheless, 'He that is born of God cannot commit sin,' 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.'

. . . 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death.' "

While in New York at this time Noyes heard a discourse by Charles G. Finney, the evangelist, which indicated openness of mind on the subject of salvation from sin, and wrote him a brief note in reference to it. Mr. Finney replied:

"New York, April 3, 1837.

"Dear Brother Noyes:—I have this moment received and read your letter, and thank you for it. I have often heard of you, and of your extravagances of course. But, precious brother, I have learned not to be frightened if it is rumored that anyone has received any light which I have not myself. You speak as if you thought it doubtful whether I would correspond with such an one as you. Now it is true that I have supposed *from report* that you carried some of your views too far, but whether this is true or false I should consider it a great privilege to possess myself thoroughly of your views. My engagements are such that I cannot enter into anything like a lengthy correspondence with *any one;* but it would give me extreme pleasure to see and converse with you. I have inquired after you this winter, but have not been able to learn where you were. You are well acquainted with my beloved brother Boyle. I had hoped to see him, and have a full explanation of his views, but believe that he has gone west. I am expecting to leave the city in a short time, *i.e.*, a week from

today; and should you be in the city in the meantime, I should be rejoiced to see you at my study in the Tabernacle, entrance 95 Anthony Street.

"I think I am anxiously inquiring after truth; and although I am at last aware that I need and can have but one teacher, yet it would be a great satisfaction to me to hear from your own lips 'what thou thinkest, for as concerning this way, I know that it is everywhere spoken against.' You have had time to weigh and turn over and over your past experience . . . and have, I hope, candor enough to declare the whole truth in regard to the present state of your feelings and views. I have heard so often, and as I supposed so correctly, that you had been deranged, that I have believed it. I do not mean that I supposed you are so now, but that your first excitement upset you, and drove you into some extravagances. Now brother, I should like in the warmth of Christian love to converse this matter over with you, and learn whether you have discovered any hidden rocks on the coast, and dangerous quicksands upon which an inexperienced navigator is in danger of falling. I have no fear of the doctrine of holiness—perfect, instantaneous, perpetual holiness; and know full well that like justification sanctification is to be received by faith, and that we are as much at liberty and as much bound 'to reckon ourselves dead unto sin' as unto damnation.

"I am reading as occasion offers *The Perfectionist,* a copy of which I have by me. I suppose that contains your views. I have as yet read but little for want of time, and must defer my further perusal of it until

I get to Oberlin. I am too busy to write, and too much exhausted by continued conversations.

"Your brother,

"C. G. FINNEY."

"Immediately upon the receipt of this letter," says Noyes, "I went to New York and had an interview of several hours with Mr. Finney. He received my conversation in the spirit which his letter manifests, and I rejoice that I have an opportunity of publicly testifying that the candor and kindness of his behavior toward me was surpassingly beautiful and refreshing. In the course of our conversation he bore witness repeatedly and with warmth that he perceived in me no indications of insanity, and I left him with a reanimated hope of gaining for myself and for the gospel which I preach that public confidence without which testimony is powerless. I regarded him as the representative of a large and prominent body of professing Christians, and his letter as an expression of friendship and a demand for testimony not merely from an individual but from the most efficient, if not the most numerous division of the American church."

Still another indication of the drift of influential sentiment at this time toward Perfectionism came to light years afterward, when the letters of the Beecher family were published. In 1837 Lyman Beecher was President of the Lane Theological Seminary, and the recognized dean of American ministers; and his sons and daughters, all of exceptional ability, were engaged in pastoral and literary work in different parts of the

United States. To keep in touch with each other, scattered as they were, it was the custom of the family to send an occasional circular letter, each member on receiving it reading the communications of the rest and adding one of his own before sending it on. From one of these circular letters, written in 1837 and quoted in the *Autobiography of Lyman Beecher,* we take the following:

Charles

"Brother George's Perfectionism is a curious matter, and lies in a nutshell. That a Christian can be perfect is evident, else God commands impossibilities. Whether they ever are or not, who can decide? Does a man think himself perfect? Amen. I hope he is not mistaken. So long as he behaves well, let him pass for immaculate. If he does not behave properly, he deceives himself. If you ask, 'Have I attained,' I say, Ask God. The more you try to decide, and the nearer you come to an affirmative, the more probable is it you are deceived. The heart is deceitful; who can know it?"

Henry Ward

"I wish, George, you could be here a while and help me. . . . We have grown almost strangers to each other since you groped off to Rochester, and I would fain have some of our long talks again. As to Perfectionism, I am not greatly troubled with the fact of it in myself, or the doctrine of it in you; for I feel sure that, if you give yourself time and prayer, you will settle down right, whatever the right may be; and I rejoice on this account, that your judgment has led

you to forbear publishing, because after we have published, if we do not hit exactly right, there is a vehement temptation not to advance but rather to nurse and defend our published views. The treatises which have had influence in this world from generation to generation are those which have been matured, re-thought, re-cast, delayed."

Professor Stowe

"Dear Brother George:—As to Perfectionism, Brother Charles ''spresses my mind 'xactly,' and I trust you will duly appreciate the patriarchal, paternal, grandfatherly, and most judicious counsel of Brother Henry. Brother Charles's advice as to *faith,* and Brother Henry's as to *works* on this perfection matter are just the thing according to the best judgment of your dutiful brother."

George

"I am quite amused with the sympathy of all my brothers, and their fatherly advice touching Perfectionism, as if I were on the verge of a great precipice; but I trust in Him that is able to keep me from falling."

On his return to Newark after his interview with Finney, Noyes was sought out and given the right hand of fellowship by Beman, author of a widely-read book entitled *The Kingdom of God at Hand,* and by William Green, an intimate associate of Finney and husband of the editress of *The Advocate of Moral Reform.* A few days later Green invited him to his house in New York, and gave him a happy home for several weeks. All these evidences of friendship

and favor meant much to Noyes at a time when he was accustomed to be treated as a dangerous heretic and an outcast from society. But they were welcomed even more as indications of a spirit of candid inquiry among influential people on the subject of salvation from sin.

CHAPTER XXXIV

ESTABLISHMENT OF *The Witness*

This candid and friendly attitude on the part of Garrison, Finney and others in the spring of 1837, as well as the successful formation the preceding winter of a substantial Perfectionist church at Putney in spite of the prevailing anti-organization ideas, brought Noyes to the opinion that the time was ripe for a new forward move. Accordingly on the 20th of August in that year we find him at Ithaca, New York, issuing the first number of a periodical called *The Witness*. This proved to be the beginning of a series of publications under various titles extending through more than forty years.

Extracts from the Initial Numbers of "The Witness"

I was led into this region by many singular and manifest tokens of God's will. I had long desired to traverse the central and western parts of New York, because I regarded them as the birth-place of many of the mightiest moral and political movements of the times in which we live. Yet I had never found a fit occasion for the visit, and was waiting for an introduction. Soon after my residence with Mr. Green in New York City Jarvis Rider, a young man from Deruyter, Madison County, New York, came to my boarding-house desiring conversation with me. We

soon found each other to be kindred spirits, and remained together many weeks. He proposed that I should return with him to the west, though he candidly confessed that his reputation would be of small service to me even among Perfectionists. After my confidence in his integrity was established I cared little for the infamy attached to his name, knowing that all who honor God will be honored in due time, and concluded to accompany him. We left New York in company with John B. Lyvere and Abram Smith; remained a few days at Smith's residence near Kingston, and from thence three of us, Rider, Lyvere and I started on foot for the west. Though we had but a few shillings, we hesitated not to expose ourselves to the mercy of God by undertaking a long journey among strangers, assuredly believing that our employer would provide for our necessities. As long as our money lasted we fared poorly. Afterwards we lacked nothing. At evening on the second day arriving at Middletown we asked a man for the liberty to sleep in his barn. He kindly inquired our circumstances, and instead of sending us to his barn gave us beds with a supper and breakfast, showed us his farm and garden, and sent us on our way with benedictions. His name is Col. Noah Dimick. The third evening we were treated in like manner at Delhi by persons whose names I know not. The fourth evening, which was Saturday, we arrived hungry and weary at the west village in Walton, greatly desiring a resting-place for the Sabbath, but scarcely thinking it possible to find such hospitality. As we sat by the wayside in

sad conversation about our prospects a man came toward us from a house a quarter of a mile distant, of his own accord drew from us a statement of our wants, freely offered us the hospitality of his house for the Sabbath, and informed us that, as he was going to Unadilla with two wagons on Monday, he could carry us twenty-five miles on our way. Here we remembered the words of Jesus: "When I sent you out without scrip or purse, lacked ye anything?" And we said, "Nothing." This man's name is Benedict. We understood that some of his neighbors counseled him not to harbor us, lest some mischief should come upon him; but he answered them that he would do what seemed to be his duty at a venture. On Monday he carried us to Unadilla. At evening as we were traveling on the mountains west of that place we applied at a lonely house for entertainment, and were joyfully surprised at finding a family of believers, with whom Rider had long been acquainted. They received us as brethren gladly. After remaining with them one day we went on our way, and in a few hours reached the region of our destination, and found friends and kindness in abundance. I have related scarcely a specimen of our "good luck" on this journey. Many more acts of kindness might be mentioned; but they need not be published in order to be sure of their reward. At Genoa, a few miles from this place, I found a friend who encouraged me to commence a paper by furnishing me with the means of publishing this number; and since I have found here printers who are not afraid to suffer a heretic

to speak for himself, I rejoice in the hope that I have come to a land of liberality, a people who allow and love freedom of speech and of the press. . . .

The Witness will be published in the form and style of which this paper is a sample. Its character will correspond to its title. I present myself before the Court which shall hear and try my testimony not as an editorial adventurer or a volunteer champion, but as a simple witness for the truth, summoned by the subpoena and bound by the oath which God administers to all who speak in his name: to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in relation to the great controversy between him and the human race. . . .

And now, beloved reader, I ask you not to become a subscriber to this paper for my sake. I look to God and not to my subscription list for support and countenance. "The laborer is worthy of his hire," but he should be paid by his employer, not by his fellow-servants. . . . I have so fully proved the faithfulness of my employer, that I have not the least anxiety about the future either in respect to my spiritual or temporal necessities. . . . As a witness I can promise for the amount of my testimony, because I know how long a story I have to tell; but I cannot promise as to times and seasons, because I must testify not at such regular intervals as I or my readers may wish, but at such times as the Court shall order. As God is a just judge, I know he will never order me to testify without giving me the means. Whenever therefore my means fail, I receive an order to keep silence. But I am fully determined to give my subscribers sooner or later

twenty-six numbers. . . . If you wish for the paper without money and without price, send me simply your name. If you prefer to pay for it, send me your name with one dollar. If you dislike both of these modes of subscription, there is still another, which I myself prefer: to wit, send me your name with a gift of any amount, more or less. So your money shall be a love token to me, and my paper shall be not an article of merchandise but a present to you. I can buy and sell with an enemy, but I can exchange gifts only with a friend. . . . I have no fear of failure by a "run" upon me in consequence of thus opening the doors of my bank, for I believe the time is not distant when all who receive my testimony will have but one heart, and of course but one purse.

As a lover of Jesus Christ I am bound to serve his people, not indeed with self-defeating officiousness but with self-sacrificing promptness. I shall therefore take for granted at a venture that there are many who, like Mr. Finney, "have no fear of the doctrine of holiness, perfect, instantaneous, perpetual holiness," who would "like in the warmth of Christian love to converse this matter over," though they have not yet professed the attainment. To such as thus "have an ear to hear" I offer my service with a joyful willingness to communicate whatsoever I have learned about the "rocks and quicksands of the coast" by several years of perilous and stormy experience.

I confess I have long anticipated and desired the ministry upon which I am now entering. But especially since the publication of *The Perfectionist* ceased, I have sought the opportunity which is now presented

of effectually declaring that that paper does not "contain my views," as Mr. Finney and others suppose. It ought to be known, if it is not, that, although I was several months connected with James Boyle in the publication of that paper, I held but a subordinate office, and there was a material difference of sentiment between us from the beginning. . . . That I may no longer be burdened with the credit, or discredit, of sentiments that are not my own, and also that such as are disposed may have the means of ascertaining correctly how far *The Perfectionist* ought to be regarded as allied and introductory to this publication, I insert here a list of the articles written by me for that paper: [Here follows a list containing twenty titles.] For these alone I am responsible; these contain at least a skeleton of my present views; by these I am willing that my qualifications for the present undertaking should be judged. . . .

From what has been said it will be perceived that the object of the present publication is twofold, first to meet the demands of those who are honestly inquiring the "way of holiness," and then to combat the errors of those who "hold the truth in unrighteousness."

The Witness will not be confined in the scope of its discussions within the limits usually occupied by religious periodicals. I shall regard none of the topics which may properly interest the human mind as forbidden ground. I have long traversed unshackled the broad field of universal truth, and have learned to scale or trample down the fences with which that field has been disfigured by scientific fools. As an inhabitant and with others a joint proprietor of the universe,

I will not be robbed of the right of universal thought. I shall therefore pass and repass as I please the usual boundaries of technical theology, knowing that the theology of heaven includes every other science. Regarding man as a spiritual, intellectual, moral and physical being I account it the proper object of his existence to glorify his Maker by the proportionate and unlimited development of each of these departments of his nature. With a single eye therefore to the glory of God by the redemption of man I may properly, nay I must necessarily examine and discuss not merely the spiritual and moral but also the intellectual and physical relations of mankind.

Offenses

"In that day shall the deaf hear the word of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off, that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought." Isaiah 29: 18-21.

I set this passage at the head of my paper, that I may as far as possible forestall and prevent offenses. I know that the meek and the poor in spirit will find in the past and following pages food convenient for them; and I know with equal certainty that such as watch for iniquity and are disposed to make a man an offender for a word will find fatal stumbling-blocks. To the first I bid a welcome to the joy which God has

promised them; to the last I cast his warning and his woe. As a minister commissioned of God I enter upon the service to which I am called with a long-pondered and fearful conviction, that it were better for me to sink in the sea with a millstone about my neck than to offend one of God's little ones; and I have the assurance from him whose bond is never broken, that I have given, and shall give "no offense in anything." If any stumble, let them understand that I have the testimony of my own conscience and of the Holy Ghost, that I am pure of their blood; that "in simplicity and godly sincerity, not by fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have my conversation in the world." If any tremble for others, though able to bear my plainness of speech themselves, let me assure them, that I have ascertained by much experience that persons of common sense are not so dangerously delicate and destructible as Satan, their adversary, would have them imagine, that the meek and the poor in spirit are much oftener starved than stumbled, and that the purity which cannot bear the light is little worth. For one I am determined no longer to heed the carping malice of scorners or the whining timidity of the fearful. I will not be frightened by the shadow of a stumbling-block from the work of removing the substantial causes of offense. The pathway of God's redeemed is blocked up not by the imprudent boldness of his witnesses in this generation, but by the time-honored falsehoods of his enemies in the generations of eighteen hundred years, which make the simplest truths seem monstrous heresies. Shall I then "shun to declare the whole counsel of God," because for-

sooth my testimony in displacing sanctified abominations must necessarily shake and terrify and offend those who cleave to them? God forbid. I will rather lay hold of the pillars of the Philistines' temple, and pray God to "strengthen me for this once," that I may make a full end of their idolatry, though I die with them myself.

Causes of Suffering

Incontinent benevolence is, in my view, the cause of a great part of the sufferings of the saints. I mean that kind of benevolence which cannot scrutinize and reject the flatteries of hypocrites, which shrinks from inflicting the just penalty of guilt, which hopes where hope is vain and therefore injurious, which would fain love righteousness without hating iniquity. This has been the chief cause of my sufferings. By reason of ignorance and false education I have suffered my heart to bleed for reprobates, till I was almost too weak to do any good to God's people. Such benevolence accomplishes nothing but the desolation of its subjects. It is a breach in the spirit, by which the heart's blood is poured out not a sacrifice unto God, but a libation to that mother of abominations, who is described as being "drunk with the blood of the saints." I judge by my own recovery, that God is about to "bind up the breach of his people, and heal the stroke of their wound."

With this introduction Noyes lays before the reader his renunciation letter to Charles H. Weld, the correspondence by which he broke fellowship with Latourette, a description of the character and career of T. R.

Gates, and the story of the Gates-Boyle attack on Paul.* He concludes his exposure of "false brethren" by recalling his former statement in a letter to Boyle, that "professors of orthodox religion in this day fill the front rank of the army of hell," and saying: "Soon after the date of this remark a detachment of Perfectionists wheeled about in the midst of the battle and commenced a cannonade upon the saints of the Most High. In this day I should say, 'Professors of perfect holiness fill the front rank of the army of hell.' Most of their guns however are silent, having been spiked by their own superstitious zeal against the use of 'Babylonish' weapons."

The third number of *The Witness* concludes with the following address:

To The Reader

Beloved, as I am a Yankee by birth, I will take the liberty to guess your thoughts after reading this paper. Peradventure you are saying to yourself: "This is a strange fellow. What to make of all this cutting and slashing and boasting and recklessness I cannot tell. Is the man seeking his own exaltation by casting others down? Truly he has chosen a strange way to win favor. I fear he is an impostor." To these thoughts I answer, I commend you for your caution, and shall rejoice if the suspicious appearance of this paper increases it. Herein I differ from most of those who say they are apostles; I give you full liberty to judge for yourself, exhorting you again to beware of false prophets. If I fail to commend myself to your under-

*See Chapter XXIX.

standing and conscience, I ask for no credit on account of any other marks of apostleship. If a man raises the dead before my eyes and then requires me to believe that two and two make five, I say to him, "You are not an apostle but a liar, and the miracles you work only place you on a level with the magicians of Egypt and the two-horned dragon of the Apocalypse." I pray you, beloved, to "prove all things, and hold fast only that which is good." Let no feelings of friendship toward me color your opinion of my writings, for I can assure you, if you are not already assured, that my works and yours and all others will at last be tried by fire. I only ask for time to "make a full proof of my ministry" by the tests of the gospel. If I fail in this, you will have sufficient evidence that I am not a minister of God. That you may have boldness thus to bear with me, I beg you to remember that antichrist can only almost "deceive the very elect"; "if it were possible," is the expression used by Christ, showing that their deception is in fact impossible.

Whatever may be your reception of my efforts, you will never turn me from the labor of love which God has set before me, for my rule of action is Paul's: "I will most gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." My affection toward you is predominantly subjective, and therefore not dependent on objective encouragement. The love of Jesus is too mighty to be foiled by indifference or rejection or even enmity. Nothing but reciprocal and equal love can assuage its restlessness and absorb its energy.

Since one of the chief purposes of *The Witness* was to provide an authoritative statement of Perfectionist teachings, Noyes brought forward into the first numbers of the paper, either by explicit reference or by reprint, all of the twenty articles which he had formerly contributed to *The Perfectionist;* and in the course of the following summer he republished these articles in the form of a pamphlet called *The Way of Holiness,* which he sent to all his subscribers. In this manner he reaffirmed the leading doctrines of Perfectionism, and assumed them as the basis of his future work.

CHAPTER XXXV

RELATIONS WITH ABIGAIL MERWIN

Noyes to Abigail Merwin

Putney, December 28, 1835.

Dear Sister:—Notwithstanding the evil surmisings which I am aware will arise in many minds in consequence of your receiving a communication from such a person as myself I am constrained by the golden rule—"Whatsoever ye would that others should do to you, do even so to them"—to address you without ceremony. I know too well the power of the grace of God to believe that your peace has been materially disturbed by the reports you have heard concerning my feelings toward you. Yet I do believe that a frank disclosure of some of the "many things," to which I alluded at our last interview, would in some measure relieve your mind, or at least gratify an innocent curiosity. I would not stumble any of God's little ones by premature exposures of his dealings with me. Rather let my name be covered with infamy for the little time that must pass before the kingdom of God shall come. Yet I love the light, and when God permits me from time to time to uncover any portion of the record of my consciousness and memory, I taste a joy which foretells the feast which will be spread for us when "we shall know as we are known."

Let it be distinctly understood at the outset, that I

intend no interference with any earthly engagement. I dwell where "the fashion of this world has passed away," and as I cannot go back to those whom I have left asleep, so I have no desire to disturb their dreams until they shall hear that voice of the Son of God, which will effectually break their slumbers and sever every earthly tie. "A bruised reed I will not break, and the smoking flax I will not quench, till God shall send forth judgment unto victory." If God permits you to marry another before his kingdom comes, I will say, Amen, with a whole heart. For the present permit me only to give you a brief account of my exercises in relation to you. I ask you not to conceal what I write from your lover, your friends, or the world. God knows I am not ashamed of his doings, nor afraid of disappointment.

Previous to my acquaintance with you my heart had never yielded to the claim of woman. I had devoted myself to the Lord with the purpose never to be married. When I received the gospel in which I now stand, that purpose with many other positive engagements was swept away. Before I saw you I knew that the Lord's will, not mine would be done in this matter. In the darkness of that memorable period you arose like a morning-star to my soul. By the manifest providence of God we were thrown together in circumstances of exceeding interest. Continued acquaintance increased my respect and affection for you, and I confess without shame that I loved you as I never loved another, for reasons which I never saw in any other. In these circumstances the thought of marriage was unavoidable. But remaining self-

suspicion forbade me to cherish it, and I remained waiting on the Lord. During my sufferings in New York, among many other similar visions, you were presented to me as "Satan transformed into an angel of light." I instantly tore you from my bosom, and presented myself again as a virgin to the Lord. I was not surprised when I heard of your departure from the faith. But I believed you honest, and suffered none to speak evil of you without rebuke. For many months subsequent to our separation I longed after you, but was not permitted to visit you. At length in the midst of another series of sufferings at Prospect I saw you again clothed in white robes, and by the word of the Lord you were given to me. My assurance that you would be mine was so strong, that I scrupled not to declare it openly. At the same time I was instructed as to the place which the marriage relation will hold in the coming dispensation. Thenceforward I have been with you in spirit, not doubting that you will ere long return to your first love and dwell with me in the bosom of God. I have been compelled to walk wholly by faith and not by sight. Outward appearances have contradicted the testimony of God, until your enemies and mine have tauntingly asked, "Where is now your promise?" Still I have not been permitted to waver. When I heard you were engaged and saw your betrothed, I anxiously scrutinized again the grounds of my faith, lest I should wrong an innocent man. Thrice like Paul I besought the Lord that you might depart from me, and thrice like him I was refused. I know now that my love for you is the gift of God, pure and free, above all

jealousy and above all fear. I can say of you to my Father: "She was thine, and thou gavest her to me; all mine are thine, and thine are mine." Nothing can shake my assurance that in a coming time you will be my joy and crown—"a diadem of glory from the hand of the Lord."

In thus frankly declaring my love be assured I confess no bondage. I can tear you from my bosom again at the bidding of God, and again I say, if you are permitted to marry another, herein I rejoice and will rejoice, praying that you and yours may be blessed of God. Still I have the right and the will to love you as the workmanship of God, as my sister, as my neighbor, as myself. I ask no more till God shall make you know that he has joined us in an immortal marriage, and that what God hath joined together man cannot put asunder.

Your brother,

J. H. Noyes.

The defection of Abigail Merwin was a staggering blow to Noyes. He naturally felt that before taking such a radical step she should have given him an opportunity to explain whatever might be troubling her. He did not however immediately take the initiative in seeking her, partly because of distrust and partly because he felt that it was for her to make the advance. Thus the six months of his service on the paper at New Haven slipped by with no explanations on either side.

But he could not forget her. His round of duty led him daily across an open park on which fronted

the house where she lived. He knew her window; and his feelings of bereavement and yearning, especially when he passed her lighted room at night, were unutterable. One day as he was turning a corner he met her face to face. There was a pause, recognition, and formal greeting—nothing more.

After his change of view at Prospect in the summer of 1835 Noyes called on Miss Merwin, hoping for reconciliation. He was politely received. She claimed to be still a Perfectionist, and to have confidence in his religious character. He soon called on her again, and had much conversation with her. But just at this time reports were being circulated about Noyes's conflict with Charles H. Weld, and Miss Merwin seemed embarrassed and prejudiced. Her father was bitterly opposed, and told Noyes that he did not wish him to continue his attentions. Noyes never saw her afterward.

Miss Merwin had formerly been engaged to a Mr. Platt, and after the interview that has been described she wrote to him. This led to a re-engagement. In September 1835 a friend with whom Noyes was walking pointed out Mr. Platt, and said, "That is the man to whom Miss Merwin is engaged." It was a dagger at Noyes's heart. But he recovered himself, and always afterward felt reconciled.

To his letter of December 28, 1835, Noyes received no reply. On the other hand months passed and nothing came of Miss Merwin's engagement to Mr. Platt. It even became rumored among her friends that she was still unsettled in mind.

The following summer, while Noyes was in New

Haven, Boyle mentioned to him one day that he had received an invitation to take tea with Miss Merwin and urged Noyes to accompany him. Noyes, supposing that the invitation to him issued not from Miss Merwin but from Boyle, of course declined. Later he had reason to believe that Boyle's manner of presenting the invitation was a "sort of devil's trick," and that thus an eleventh hour opportunity for reconciliation had been lost.

After this Noyes left New Haven. At last in the early part of January 1837 he received the long-awaited news of Miss Merwin's marriage. Subsequently he learned that Mr. and Mrs. Platt had gone to reside at Ithaca, New York, where Mr. Platt was engaged as a teacher in the Ithaca Academy.

In a dispute with his mother as to his motives in going to Ithaca, Noyes wrote January 21, 1841:

"I went for the purpose on the one hand of starting the paper and the kingdom of God in the center of New York State, and on the other of pursuing and confronting Abigail Merwin, who had deserted her post as my helper."

Home-talk by Noyes, April 9, 1851

The issue between the faithfulness of God and the unfaithfulness of Satan is being tried in the case of Abigail Merwin. I came by Providence and her request into the relation of pastor to her, and this in a more solemn and decisive way than I could by any formality such as the churches use. This relation imposes duties on me that are wholly irrespective of her subsequent choice. If God placed me in that rela-

tion to her and she accepted it, she cannot break it up by a mere change of her feelings and will, unless I prove recreant to my responsibility.

After God had taught me the faithfulness that never gives up, I acted faithfully as Abigail Merwin's pastor. I held on to her and sought her not for my own pleasure but as a lover of her soul. I called upon her until her father dismissed me from the house. When I learned that she was engaged, I wrote her a letter giving her the best word of counsel that I had. When she married and moved to Ithaca, I followed her. I stayed there as long as she did.

CHAPTER XXXVI

RECEPTION OF *The Witness*

Noyes to His Brother Horatio

Ithaca, August 19, 1837.

Dear Brother:—The papers I send you save me the trouble of telling you long stories of myself. If you think them worth the pains, you will of course distribute them among our friends in Putney, and send me a list of subscribers.

You perceive I have the prospect of being stationary for one year at least. This, I doubt not, will be a matter of rejoicing to you and to all who have bewailed my vagabond propensities. I am situated in the most celestial part of a most celestial village. So you will say yourself, should you take a notion to come here. If my business enlarges, as I have some reason to expect, I shall make room here for helpers, and I want such as will be bold and firm. I merely suggest this for consideration. Perhaps you will say I am at my old trade of building air-castles. Be it so. "Charity hopeth all things." One thing is certain: I am happily embarking according to the manifest will of God in a *bona fide* matter-of-fact employment, and "hitherto hath the Lord helped me." My sky is cloudless.

Good-bye. Yours etc.,

J. H. NOYES.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Noyes

Putney, August 30, 1837.

Dear John:—It would be useless to pretend, that we receive intelligence of you with indifference or know, that you have a prospect of employment that is agreeable to you, without pleasure. The last we heard of you H. Brooks informed W. White, that he met you in the park at New York apparently poor and deserted. It gave me pain for a moment, and then my faith triumphed, and although you were often in my mind I have been kept in great peace. . . .

Your paper looks well for the progress of truth. As I am abundantly aware that no efforts according to the wisdom of this world will do anything for it, I feel as if my strength will be to sit still, and let it work for itself. . . .

Horatio is expecting to start for Michigan the last of September and, Providence permitting, he will come to you. As it will be very convenient for me to send shirts or anything of that kind, I shall probably send some, unless forbidden. . . .

Your father is, as you would suppose, much gratified with your undertaking. I think he fails, but he is much engaged on his farm and in other ways. He says: "Tell him to be cautious in money matters. A shoemaker must not go beyond his last." He will send five dollars now for papers to be sent to Aunt Sophia and several others of our acquaintance. . . . Besides he insists on keeping two numbers not to lend. . . .

I saw Mr. Cutler today. He thinks there will be several subscriptions on the Street. . . . Morgan was

in lately. He said he might give notice that he would preach next Sunday. I doubt his qualifications. . . . There is no going back among the children, but not much apparent advance. Mr. and Mrs. Palmer and Mrs. Clark have made considerable stir in their way this summer. . . . I think a new era is commencing.

Your mother,

P. Noyes.

David Harrison to Noyes

Meriden, August 24, 1837.

Dear Brother:—I have just received *The Witness,* for which I thank God more than for anything and everything else I have lived to see. . . . Dear man, go on! My prayer is for you and all the elect of God.

Yours,

David Harrison.

Harriet A. Holton to Noyes

Westminster, Sept. 1, 1837.

Dear—I can only say "brother" with feelings similar to those a child would have towards an elder brother arrived at manhood. On receiving *The Witness* I felt desirous to write and send you a "love token," but for several reasons delayed it. Maria Clark is now with me on her way to Boston expecting to go within a few weeks to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to become a teacher. . . . She needed the money I was going to enclose, so I have delayed my letter until more was provided. Mrs. Crawford speaks of some who, "when put to the test, are found wanting"; yet

I know there are those who in casting in a mite give more than I of my abundance.*

Maria says you are situated where you can overlook us all. I believe her, yet I feel a desire to speak to you of what I have been learning of late. A few weeks since I was emptied of that kind of knowledge which puffeth up, and I have since desired to be filled again only with that which edifieth. . . . I see before me a heavenly disinterestedness, where self-will is slain. . . . I wish to be reproved; certainly I shall rejoice to receive a printed letter from you once in two weeks. . . . No matter if I do not know where I am; I desire to be made what the Lord would have me to be.

This afternoon while thinking of receiving *The Witness* from you I desired that your spirit might be written upon my heart. I ask a hard, a great thing. Perhaps I may be laying out a way of my own; if so, I know the Lord will overthrow it and choose his own method of drawing me into himself.

Yours through the gospel,

HARRIET A. HOLTON.

Andrew H. Elston to Noyes

Chittenango, N. Y., Sept. 1837.

Dearly Beloved of My Father:—Having no money, not even enough to pay the postage of this letter, I ask of you to send me *The Witness* in the name of the Lord. . . .

Yours in the love that never faileth,

ANDREW H. ELSTON.

* In this letter to Noyes Miss Holton enclosed eighty dollars.—G. W. N.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Noyes

Putney, Sept. 8, 1837.

Dear John:—On the receipt of your first letter Horatio presented your claims to one, who said he paid in advance for *The Perfectionist,* and received but four numbers. This rather discouraged him; and besides we felt the influence of your own teaching, not to try to force such a thing, so that, although many expressed their desire to take the paper, nothing effectual was done. Since receiving your second letter we are very desirous to do something. For myself I can say I have no fears as to the result nor as to its being according to the will of God that I do what I can to promote it; yet it is difficult to present the ordinary inducements to others. Every one that gives his dollar must have faith enough to risk it, as we cannot give any assurance that he will ever see it again or another paper.

Your father would be willing to advance any sum, but you know his ideas of security. He thinks the friends of truth will sustain it, but it is such a new way of doing business—to buy the truth and sell it not —that I hardly know.

Hariet and Charlotte are gone over to the East Part. Several there have wished to subscribe. While Horatio and I were consulting as to what was best to be done, I saw a stranger at the gate with a budget under his arm. He came to the front door and introduced himself as Mr. Palmer, your brother editor. He inquired quickly for you—had not heard a word, since he left you in New York. He is at this moment in the parlor reading your papers and letters, as much

interested as any of us. His testimony concerning you at this time will, I have no doubt, have a good influence. He says that Mr. Green is prepared to devote all his property to the Lord, and he thinks there is no doubt the paper will be sustained.

Enclosed are twenty dollars with the names of the subscribers. . . .

Your mother,

P. Noyes.

Noyes to Harriet A. Holton

Ithaca, Sept. 15, 1837.

Dear Sister:—I will tell you the circumstances under which I received your letter, and you may judge for yourself whether it was acceptable. When I was about publishing the first number, Jarvis Rider, expecting to be at Utica, requested me to send him twenty-four papers directed to that place. Utica is the seat of government for western Perfectionism, and we supposed of course that Dutton, Patten and many others there would welcome the paper. I sent the papers, but Rider was compelled to leave Utica before they arrived, having no place to lay his head. George Dutton however engaged to take the papers from the office and distribute them. After waiting several weeks without a word from Utica I thought it expedient to go there and spy out the land. Accordingly on Tuesday I took the stage, arrived there at night, in the morning called at the post-office, found the papers and my letter to Rider remaining in the office, immediately went on board a canal boat, and returned here by way of the lake bringing back the spoil. On

my return I found your gift, and verily it was like the "bounty of Abigail." Now "I have all things, and abound." My heart is too full of love, joy and peace to find free course on a sheet of paper; and I have long since learned that the deepest waters make the least noise, so I will send you only half a sheet and trust the Lord to give me opportunity of proving my gratitude by deeds.

Yours in the unity of the Spirit,

J. H. Noyes.

Noyes to George Dutton

Ithaca, Sept. 18, 1837.

Beloved:—I have just received your letter to Jarvis Rider of Sept. 3rd, and I feel disposed, though I have never seen your face, to write you a few words about the matters of which you speak. You probably know before this time that it was by no fault of mine that you received no papers. I wrote to Rider (supposing he would be in Utica) for the same purpose which now induces me to write, that I may express to the Utica believers my own feelings of friendship and my desire for their friendship in return. When I found my papers and letter remaining in the office, I thought it would be useless to intrude myself upon those who had thus seemingly scorned my advances. But since it appears that some mistake caused the neglect, I thank God that he has kept me back from doing that which would have made an incurable breach. And now I ask you and brother Chauncey and Patten and all others, to whom this writing may come, not to take my paper but to deal with me in a spirit of forbearance and

love. I know full well where "the shoe pinches." I have long been a stumbling-block to all about me, because I have so exercised the nature and grace which God has given me as to alarm that spirit of this world which "lusteth to envy" and excite fears lest I should be exalted above measure. I expect my future course will be still more offensive than the past. God is calling and leading me to an eminence, where I shall surely be an object of the hottest jealousy, and of course a mark for the archers. I know that all who are in a state to be tormented by my prosperity and exaltation will ere long be in hell. But I would most gladly, if possible, prevent such results by any explanations or concessions which can be made without dishonoring God, my husband. If there is a disposition among you to bear with me till I can frankly make known to you all that is in my heart, I know I shall convince you that I "seek not my own glory, but the glory of him that sent me," and that I walk solely by the rule which he gives me.

Give my love to all who love the Lord Jesus, and write me, if you please. I send you the papers.

Yours in the Lord,

J. H. Noyes.

Mrs. Polly Noyes to Noyes

Putney, Oct. 1, 1837.

Dear John:— . . . I have had much exercise and experience in the gospel this summer, frequently shut up as I was last winter, but always taught and advanced by such seasons. I confess as I have opportunity that I am free from sin, that I have the faith

that overcomes the world, and that God sustains the confession. Still it is an outward teaching of the Spirit, comparable to what the disciples had while Jesus was with them in the flesh; with all his power and wisdom they were not inwardly taught till after the Day of Pentecost. . . . I rejoice to believe that some are greatly in advance of myself, and likewise that I shall not be permitted to rest where I am. . . .

I am somewhat confirmed in my belief that the gospel in its fullness has been received by but few from the fact that many, who gave a more decided testimony last year, do not seem by their own confession to be so much in advance of others as they were. Miss Holton said in a letter to Mrs. Crawford, that she did not feel herself in advance of her. . . . Mr. Palmer went over to the East Part twice, and said of them, that he thought they had a good deal of faith, but they needed discipline. He said of Miss Clark, that she was a modern miracle. He said you were above ordinary contingencies; expressed great confidence; wished much Horatio to be with you. Though desiring to hear from you before he left, he was obliged to depart before the last paper came. He went over the hill on foot towards Albany. . . .

I have not seen any one since the last paper came, but I shall be mistaken, if there is not a sensation made by it in the minds of some. Your father says: "What does John mean by thus flying from one thing to another? I do not understand it." Harriet says: "I have read it over four times already." When I express my astonishment at your temerity and uncompromising attitude, Charlotte says: "He has faith for

what he does." In a letter received yesterday Mary writes: "Mr. Mead says, it looks rather too belligerent." Mrs. Campbell said, she knew not what to think of the third number at first, but she liked it better the more she read it. Mrs. Crawford said, she liked it very much. All this is really of little consequence in view of what is your dependence.

For myself, while I am not wholly free from feelings on your account, I am very conscious that my only way is to set my face fully toward the Lord, and not think of husband or children, though they are removed to the uttermost parts of the earth. The declaration, "Woe to him that abolishes the law of the apostasy before he stands in the holiness of the resurrection," expresses a great deal and fences out any that might take advantage of your liberty.

Your mother,

P. NOYES.

Noyes to His Mother

Ithaca, Oct. 6, 1837.

Dear Mother:—I send you herewith the papers you requested. . . . "Don't fret." God knows what I am doing, and so do I in part—enough to be satisfied that great good and glory is to be the result of the strange work which he is bringing to pass by me.

Mrs. Campbell's testimony concerning the last paper will, I doubt not, be the testimony of all the pure in heart, that it "improves by acquaintance." This is the distinguishing nature of God's works. The Bible is like a chestnut in its burr: the meat is inside of a "sword turning every way."

As to my circumstances, I have paid all my debts, even to the first loan which I got at Genoa, but have only money enough to pay my board for one week. I shall not publish any more papers till I can do it without credit. If God pleases, I am willing to defer publishing till he stirs up the hearts of those who love the truth to care for my wants, or till I can obtain the requisite money by my own labor. Any way I shall rejoice and be content, knowing that I am only making proof of my ministry by suffering afflictions, necessities—yea, and stripes and death for Christ's sake. God will thus make us white till the time of the end; for it is yet for a time appointed.

Tell Horatio to come and pay his debts as well as collect them. I want to see him awake and put on strength. No half-way work will stand in the day of the Lord of Hosts. Let him and all others be sure, that I am indeed a man of war, and let them say, Amen.

Yours in Christ,

J. H. Noyes.



J. H NOYES, 1878
Bergman

CHAPTER XXXVII

FINAL DELIMITATION OF SALVATION FROM SIN

After years of experience and study Noyes at last redefined salvation from sin with a view to excluding legality on the one side and antinomianism on the other. "Absolute personal liberty," he said, "is essential to holiness. That is Paul's doctrine. But in Paul's doctrine as a whole there are a thousand safeguards against antinomianism which the liberty-maniacs know nothing about." The discriminations by which he aimed to escape this Scylla and Charybdis of religious experience may be seen in the quotations that follow, and in the chart on page 382.

The Law

The Witness, January 1840

In the epistle to the Romans Paul sums up the system of theology which he calls his gospel in the comprehensive saying: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

The idea of the law's coming to an end is frightful only when disjoined from that which Paul constantly connects with it, namely, consequent righteousness. Persons whose experience has never given them a clear and strong conception of the power of love naturally imagine that the end of the law is necessarily the end

of all godly influence and of all righteousness. They see not the spirit of love, which in the gospel stands at the end of the law, and the transition from law to love seems to them like leaping from a rock into a void abyss. The transition which Paul proposes, however, is not from a rock to nothing, but from a visible "Slough of Despond" to an invisible rock of strength.

It must be borne in mind that the abolishment of the Mosaic code is not the abolishment of the will of God that men should love Himself and each other, but only of a particular legal form of expressing and enforcing that will. To illustrate: Suppose the Legislature of Vermont to be annihilated by a sudden revolution, and its whole code of laws to be thus abolished. Would that be an abolishment of all the moral truth contained in that code? Would it leave the people of Vermont at liberty to steal and murder with impunity and with a good conscience? The nature of things remaining the same, the nature and necessity of virtuous conduct would remain the same, though the authority of the local legislature and the specific penalties of their code should be removed. So the abolishment of the whole Mosaic institute (which as compared with the eternal foundations of moral truth is but a local legislature) does not affect the value and necessity of love to God and man. But it enables God to approach men as a father instead of a law-giver, and thus by love and truth to put the righteousness of the law into their hearts.

We may take a view of the whole matter by another illustration: Suppose a family of children in the ab-

sence of their parents is subjected to an imperative code of written regulations, some of them founded in the immutable nature of things, and some of them merely temporary and circumstantial. The father and mother at length return to their place in the household. At the outset of their personal administration they address the children thus: "Do not think that we have come to set aside the principles which have hitherto directed your conduct. Our object is to carry them into full execution, and we shall do this not by means of the formal statutes which have heretofore been your rules, but by our own personal influence and example. We now abolish the written code—the whole of it—and call upon you to look to us for direction." In such a case it might be said in one sense that the law of the household was established, and in another that it was abolished. But it would certainly be foolishness to say that a part of the written code was established and a part abolished. It is true that in the new personal government the distinction between that which was necessary and that which was only circumstantial in the old code might appear. Essential moral principles might be insisted upon in the exhortations, persuasions and example of the parents, while mere formal regulations might be neglected. Even so Christ and his apostles transferred the vital elements of the Mosaic law to the discipline of the gospel, while they left the ceremonial part under the sentence of abrogation.

To the question, what then is the purpose of the law, we answer:

First, the law was an enclosure, which, while it by

no means purified its subjects, yet kept them within the reach of God's influence till the purifying power of the gospel could be brought to bear. A shepherd proposing to wash his flock first shuts them up in a fold. The use of the fold is not to wash the sheep, but to keep them within necessary bounds until the shepherd can take them and wash them himself.

Second, the Mosaic code, though abolished as an instrument of government, yet stands on record as a glorious development of truth. While we cannot give it the place of Christ as our sanctifier and judge, we may still interrogate it as a witness; for, though we are not under the law, we are under love and truth, and the truth contained in the record of the law is an important part of the instrumentality of the gospel. Indeed the information conveyed by the law concerning the holiness of God, the standard of character necessary to man's acceptance by him, and the wrath which awaits ungodliness is the very platform on which the gospel is erected.

Having disposed of the law we now inquire, what are God's instruments of government in the kingdom of Christ. And first of all we name the love of God. In the life and death of Christ God set man a perfect example of love. That example, lifted up like the serpent in the wilderness in the sight of sinners, is a spiritual power far mightier than the law.

Next in importance is faith. By this the love of God is accepted by the individual, and applied to the sanctification of passion and the direction of outward conduct.

A third influence by which God governs men in the

kingdom of Christ is his outward word. One vehicle of that word is the Bible. But the principal external agency employed in the Primitive Church was that of apostles, prophets, and teachers. The chief work of these was to bear witness of God's perfect love. But it is evident that they were not mere witnesses. The whole record of the New Testament exhibits them as commissioned to reprove, correct, exhort and watch over the church. This element of the government of love has been extensively confounded with the law. Many have supposed that, because we are not under the law, we are not subjects of exhortation and correction. The fallacy of this idea might be assumed from the simple fact that Paul, from whom we get all our anti-legal views, was "instant in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all long-suffering." It is not to be supposed that he on the one hand taught believers they were not under law, and on the other imposed law upon them. He evidently saw a clear distinction between the government of a father and that of a law-giver. And in fact his exhortations and even commands differed from law in many particulars. In the first place they were not like law, dead-letter rules, but like the words of Christ they were spirit and life. Moreover they did not depend on a penalty for their execution. As they were living words, they found a living echo in the hearts of those to whom they were addressed, and obedience was not a matter of conscientious constraint, but of spiritual impulse. Love instead of fear presided over the transaction.

A fourth element of discipline in the kingdom of

Christ is the providential application of suffering. It is evident that "fiery trials" both of a temporal and spiritual nature were among the chief agencies of education in the Primitive Church, insomuch that Paul said: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

In almost every instance where the work of salvation is spoken of in the New Testament it is ascribed to a twofold agency, instruction addressed to the understanding, and love renewing the heart. The gospel is a dispensation not of love alone, as antinomian Perfectionists maintain, nor of love and law, as legal Perfectionists maintain, but of love and truth according to the word of God. In thus conjoining love with truth we lay a foundation for all those measures which were employed in the Primitive Church for the outward education and correction of believers and make the inculcation of sound doctrine a full counterpart and safe successor of the law.

Relation between Faith and Deeds

The *Witness,* October 27, 1840

A class of enthusiasts early appeared among Perfectionists, whose grand object seemed to be not to grow in righteousness but in testimony. Beginning with the glorious but much perverted doctrine that our salvation is finished in Christ these wordy champions made themselves and others partly believe, that all the victories which Christ won in his course from the

manger to the throne of heaven were theirs not only prospectively and by promise but presently and by possession. The more modest believers were disposed to make a distinction between salvation finished in Christ and salvation finished in themselves. They saw that salvation was finished in Christ in Paul's day as well as in ours, and yet Paul, blessed as he was with all the outward and inward gifts of the Spirit, still confessed after years of experience in the gospel that he had not attained the resurrection, that tribulation still awaited him, that his ultimate victory though secured in Christ was yet to be won by his own hard fighting and good judgment. To all such suggestions the enthusiasts answered: "Paul is no example for us. He lived before the second coming, while the gospel was yet in its infancy. We take Christ as he is, not as he was in Paul's day." Still the objection would return in the minds of some, that by the nature of things our personal agency in the joint transaction which secures our salvation remains the same however far the victory in Christ may have advanced. Such reasonings, however, seldom availed to break the delusions of those who made great swelling words of vanity their delight. They insisted that all that was in Christ was in them, and denied that they had anything further to do or seek.

This kind of testimony reached the crisis of its excess in the latter part of 1835. When the enthusiasts proceeded, as was natural, from extravagant words to extravagant deeds, a reaction began. Some of them fled back to legal piety, some became sober and devoted servants of Mammon, some sought refuge and excite-

ment in the reformations of the day, and some became insane.

Ill-informed persons may imagine that the above is a description of the whole body of Perfectionists. But I have had an opportunity of knowing that there are and have been from the beginning some sober ones among the inebriates, who, while they believe and rejoice in the doctrines of Perfectionism, are slow and cautious in their application of them, whose object is really holiness and not liberty under the cloak of holiness, who think more of deeds than of words. Believers of this sort have been steadily advancing in knowledge and strength, while they have seen the boasters around them again and again scattered and cast down.

To the sober I may address the language of exhortation without fear of offense, and to them I say: Beware of boasting Perfectionists. Look carefully for that hidden treasure, charity, without which angel-tongues are nothing. Remember that "the meek shall inherit the earth." Our judgment is yet to come, however much the vain-glorious and the unprincipled may believe and teach that it is past. It is as true now as it ever was, that they who may justly hope to have boldness in the day of judgment are such as in this present time fear God and withdraw from the disorderly.

Justification of Human Instrumentality and Material Means

The Witness, August 20, 1837

I can not listen to the counsel of those who condemn printing altogether as though it were necessarily a car-

nal weapon, because I perceive that their exclusive love for instruction by the immediate voice of God would wrest from my hands one of the most efficient means of commending to the world that heavenly teacher, whose communications they justly prize above all others. Moreover the principle which rejects truth on account of the form in which it comes condemns the Bible, impeaches the apostles and prophets, and charges carnal wisdom upon the Holy Ghost. Such zeal in the heedless haste of its escape from legality rushes into the bondage of liberty; as if a captive just released from prison should debar himself from the privilege of reëntering the prison, even for the purpose of releasing his fellow-captives. I have known many persons of this sort, seemingly honest, though verily superstitious, who furiously preached against preaching, and wrote against writing, and printed against printing; who manifested their zeal against legality by legislating imperiously for God and man, commanding man to hold his peace, and forbidding God to communicate his will by any other agent or means than the Holy Ghost. But I have not so learned Christ. The rule by which I have long been constrained to walk is this: I will reject and counteract error, though an angel from the highest heaven preach it; and I will receive and obey the truth, though it come to me by the mouth of a devil from the lowest hell. I will do nothing by my own wisdom or strength; but by the grace of God I will do anything which may edify the body of Christ, regardless of those on the one hand who raise the hue and cry against fanaticism, and of those on the other who denounce all human agency as

carnal and "Babylonish." The same spirit which would forbid me to print a paper excludes from the church of Christ all reproof, exhortation, reciprocal instruction, organization, in short all unity, and sets at naught the dictates of common sense and common charity.

The grand argument for this sweeping renunciation of instrumentality is its supposed tendency to exalt the Creator and abase the creature by putting away ordinary means and leaving God to work in some unprecedented way or without means altogether. Against this I contend that God has found a way in time past to work his will by means which commend themselves to common sense, and even to put honor upon men without giving his glory to another. He may do so again. And further, it is evident that means have been and may be used to the very end that "all the haughtiness of man may be brought low, and the Lord alone exalted." When Paul was prostrated on the plains of Damascus by the glory of Christ, and asked from the dust, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" the reply was, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Ananias, an obscure disciple, was chosen to teach and commission the chief apostle; and who can doubt that Paul was more abased by this ordinary and humble instrumentality than he could have been by a direct communication from Christ himself? The creature stands in greater danger of exalting himself against the Creator when he insists upon receiving only immediate revelations than when he meekly consents to sit at the feet of a beggar or a fool.

Security

***The Witness*, January 20, 1841**

"As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—John 8: 30-36.

Christ in this passage addressed persons who were properly said to have believed on him, but he did not regard them as already children of God. They were merely candidates for salvation from sin, and afterward he plainly told them that they were wicked men.

Nor did Christ regard mere incipient faith as a sure pledge of salvation. He did not say to those who believed on him, "You are converted, and therefore your salvation is secure." But he said: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It is evident from the subsequent account that many of these believers did soon fall away and become bitter enemies of Christ. The dividing line between those who have security of salvation and those who have not lies between those who are free from sin and those who are not. After saying, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," thus determining

who are servants, Christ proceeds, "The servant abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." In other words: "He that commits sin is in a servile condition. Like a literal servant he is exposed at any time to be dismissed from the household, and must ultimately either leave it or become a son. A son has a natural, perpetual right in the household. If therefore the Son of God by the revelation of the truth shall make you free from sin and identify you with himself, you shall be free from all fear of dismissal from the household of God; and this is freedom indeed."

The dispute between Methodists and Calvinists about the "perseverance of the saints" might be adjusted by introducing the above distinctions. Methodists prove by appeal to a variety of texts that the promises of salvation are conditional. So indeed they are to the subjects of the first conversion. "If ye continue in my word . . . ye shall know the truth." This "if" everywhere confronts those who are in a state of sinful discipleship. On the other hand Calvinists prove by appeal to an equal variety of texts that the promises of salvation are unconditional. Again we say, So indeed they are to the subjects of the second conversion. "The Son abideth ever." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." While the first conversion is liable to failure because it is chiefly the work of man's will, the second is forever sure because it is chiefly the work of God.

The Progressive Nature of Regeneration

The Perfectionist, December 1843

In like manner the chief dispute between Perfectionists and the churches might be adjusted by recurrence to the above theory. On the one hand Perfectionists insist that the primitive believers were perfectly holy. This is a truth which can never be successfully assailed so long as it is limited in its application to those who had advanced from incipient discipleship to a full apprehension of the gospel of Christ. On the other hand the churches insist that the primitive believers were carnal. This is a truth equally unassailable if it is restricted to those who were "babes in Christ." The mistake of Perfectionists is in allowing only one class of believers and that the highest. The mistake of the churches is in allowing only one class of believers and that the lowest.

The special glory of the Primitive Church was that it bridged over the whole chasm between a sinful world and heaven. It was not a starving settlement at the *foot* of Mount Zion, where men only hoped to reach the top after death; nor yet was it an armed and frowning fortress on the *top* of that Mount, where a favored few gloried in their exaltation while they repulsed from them a world of sinners. But it was a "way of holiness" reaching from the very foot to the very top of Zion, easily accessible to the world at one end and opening into the glories of eternity at the other. On it the ransomed of the Lord of every grade of faith found footing and help for their whole journey from earth to heaven. Wesley and his associates

TYPES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The Legal Type	The Antinomian Type	The Christian Type as Understood by Noyes
Law the paramount factor.	Freedom from law the paramount factor.	God's leadership exercised through Christ by love without law the paramount factor.
Action with insufficient faith.	Faith with insufficient action.	Faith which accepts God's leadership and brings forth corresponding action.
Cultivation of the intellect independently of faith and action.	Disparagement of the intellect as compared with faith and action.	Cultivation of the intellect as a guide to faith and action.
Exaltation of the Bible and other written truth above inspiration.	Repudiation of the Bible and other written truth.	Use of the Bible and other written truth in subordination to inspiration.
Subjection to human leaders as auxiliary to law.	Rejection of human leaders.	Acceptance of human leaders as auxiliary to God's leadership.
Self-application of suffering.	Avoidance of suffering.	Providential application of suffering.
Arrested development.	Progressive degeneration.	Progressive regeneration.
Insecurity.	False security.	Security.
Impotence.	Irresponsibility.	Salvation from sin.

almost succeeded in reopening the way of holiness, but they failed. Their attention was directed chiefly to the lower end of the road, and by denying the security of the highest class they left a dismal barrier at the upper end, which broke the communication with heaven. The erection of a church, in which perfect and everlasting holiness shall reign at the center while believers in every stage of discipleship shall find in it a home, is a work which remains yet to be done; and it must be done before the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven can be given to the saints of the Most High.

The conclusion which Noyes reached in the above paragraph marks the transition from his distinctively religious experience to his social experience. It therefore marks the appropriate point for bringing the present narrative to a close. The narrative of his career as a social architect and builder will be taken up in a future book.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE DOCTRINE OF PERFECTION IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY*

In the foregoing chapters Noyes's conception of the apostolic doctrine of perfection has been presented. That the reader may obtain a view of Noyes's theory in its historical perspective, the various perfection theories which have been developed in the Christian church since the apostolic age will now be briefly traced.

Notwithstanding the large space which the doctrine of perfection occupied in the minds of the apostles, by the end of the first century A. D. it was almost forgotten. In the writings of the Church Fathers of that period we find only vague echoes of apostolic teaching with no real understanding of its meaning, and it is evident that all vital interest in the subject had ceased. Our starting point therefore is one of virtual vacuity.

With the opening of the second century the problem of perfection began again to occupy men's thoughts, but it had become so far altered as to be unrecognizable. The Gnostics held a doctrine of per-

* For many particulars of the various perfection schemes the author is indebted to the summary by Frederic Platt in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, article *Perfection;* also to Rufus M. Jones's book entitled *Studies in Mystical Religion.*

fection which was based on Oriental dualism. To them perfection meant escape from matter, which they regarded as inherently evil. It could be attained by theosophic contemplation, and had no necessary connection with Christ. This mystical non-Christian conception of perfection was continued by the Montanists, though a subordinate place was found in their scheme for Christ. They taught a progressive revelation, first through the Old Testament prophets, then through Christ, and finally through Montanus, who according to their view inaugurated an era of full knowledge and perfection. To the Montanists, as to the Gnostics, an essential element in perfection was asceticism.

The Pelagians at the beginning of the fifth century, while continuing to subordinate the agency of Christ in the attainment of perfection, broke completely away from the mystical point of view. They taught that perfection was the crowning achievement of the human will, using only the natural means of grace. It consisted essentially in the perfect adjustment of the human organism to its appointed environment, and was to be sought chiefly through education, although the teachings and example of Christ were important aids. As illustrations of perfection in the sense understood by them they pointed to the Old Testament saints, Abraham, Noah, Enoch and Abel.

Augustine in the vehemence of his reaction against Pelagianism reinstated Christ as the prime agency in perfection. Man of himself, he maintained, could do nothing; divine grace working through Christ could do anything. But Augustine, while admitting that perfection was possible since divine grace was irresisti-

ble, nevertheless taught that, sin being a defect which in the divine scheme worked out a greater good, God had restrained his grace, so that no person might attain perfection in this life. A further addition to the elements of the problem is found in Augustine's idea that divine grace was wholly dispensed through the mediation of the church.

Following the lead of Augustine, for nearly five hundred years perfection was viewed as conformity to the laws and ordinances of the church. But since these laws consisted of the absolute moral law scaled down in various ways to the level of fallen human nature, perfection according to this view was quite possible. One might even be more than perfect, and by works of supererogation lay up a store of merit for others.

In John Scotus Erigena (850 A. D.) perfection became again mystical, as in the Gnostic system; this time however not dualistic but pantheistic. His central position was the absolute unity and wholeness of God. Evil was merely absence of God; sin merely ignorance of the truth. The remedy for both lay in absorption into the being of God, by which all deficiencies were filled up and disappeared. This idea did not immediately bear fruit in claims of mystical perfection, but lay fallow for a time, awaiting more favorable conditions of growth.

Meanwhile there was a recrudescence of the dualistic-ascetic theory of perfection. The Cathari in the eleventh century, like the Gnostics, believed in the fundamental antagonism of spirit and matter, and held that perfection consisted in escape from everything pertaining to the material world. With this view they

were naturally ascetic; but on the other hand their opposition to things material and external led them to reject water baptism, the Eucharist, and private ownership of property, thus foreshadowing the anti-legal views of the succeeding epoch.

The development commenced by John Scotus Erigena was continued at the end of the twelfth century by Amaury of Bene, who taught the identity of believers with Christ through the operation of the Holy Ghost. He returned also to the Montanist conception of progressive revelation, asserting that God the Father governed in the Jewish era through law, that God the Son governed during an intermediate era through the sacraments, and that the Holy Ghost in a final revelation made men actual members of Christ, and thus abolished the laws and sacraments which in the preceding eras were necessary instruments of government.

A popularized form of the pantheistic teachings of John Scotus Erigena and Amaury of Bene became extensively current during the Middle Ages. The Beguines and Beghards, and the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit believed that God was the source and end of all things, and that every person by elevation of thought could so open himself to the divine influx as to become all God, thus attaining perfection. A prominent element in this pantheistic perfection was always Amaury's idea of freedom from law. Some even adopted the view that a man who was thus identified with God could not sin, do what he would: either the acts of his body were God's acts, or they could in no way affect his spirit, which was swallowed up in

God—an extravagance which led off into antinomianism.

The Anabaptists at the time of the Reformation may be mentioned as in some sort claiming perfection. They returned to the Augustinian standpoint, regarding perfection as the result of divine grace working through Christ. But they broke away from Augustine's sacerdotalism. They sought the aid of divine grace not through the church but through a direct personal relation to God. They also made much of the brotherhood of man, some of the groups even going so far as to institute communism of property. Thus they gave to the search for perfection an ethical turn, which was distinctly new.

The Familists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries pushed still farther in the direction of an ethical perfection. Their founder, Henry Nicholas, made a special point of seeking a perfection which was not merely imputed or forensic, but one which manifested itself in righteous acts done by the individual himself; and he organized his followers into communities with the purpose of making them full members of Christ. Antinomianism however had already appeared in some of the mystical sects, and dread of this led the Familists to set up again obedience to the external law as an essential element in perfection.

The next step in the development of the doctrine was taken by the early Arminians in about the year 1600. They asserted the possibility of perfection in this life, and based it, after the manner of Augustine, wholly on the grace of God. They distinguished three different degrees of perfection: first, that of begin-

ners; second, that of proficients, a state of uninterrupted progress in the Christian life; third, complete perfection, in which sin was overcome. Regarding this last state they professed and taught very little. In the Arminian scheme reaction against antinomianism gained further impetus, and the possibility of "falling from grace" after it had been attained was for the first time definitely asserted.

Following the Arminians, the Quakers in about 1650 took the ground that a regenerate person might become so dead to the world and so subjected to the truth as to overcome temptations to transgress the law of God. While they held an exceptionally spiritual view of religion and for that reason discarded many outward rites, yet they believed that the law as laid down in the Scriptures was still binding. Like the Arminians they admitted the possibility of "falling from grace," and they asserted also the possibility of a further growth in grace after perfection had been attained.

In the eighteenth century, as a result of the labors and teachings of John Wesley, a great stride was taken in the doctrine of perfection. Wesley gave sharper definition to phases of the subject which before had been vague, and brought into view for the first time the basic importance of obedience to the law of love. The main features of his system are the following:

1. Obedience to Christ's law of perfect love to God and man, the one law to which a Christian is subject, is what constitutes perfection. It is consistent with involuntary ignorance and error, and hence can be called sinless only if sin is defined as a voluntary transgression of a known law.

2. The law of love however is not a mitigated law, but a higher law; and while Christians are not subject to the law of statutes and ordinances in the old exclusive sense, yet the righteousness of that law is fulfilled in those who are obedient to the law of love.

3. Perfection is viewed from the Augustinian standpoint as wrought in the soul by divine grace through faith, which is in itself the gift of God; but the Pelagian insistence upon the part played by the individual is recognized by maintaining that this faith is never given unless diligently sought by all the outward means which God has ordained.

4. While the actual attainment of perfection is regarded as necessarily the work of a moment, yet it is admitted, as in the Quaker system, that there is a gradual preparation before, and a gradual growth after the moment of attainment.

5. At first Wesley believed that perfection once attained could never be lost; but he learned by observation of those about him to recognize, with the Arminians, the possibility of a "fall from grace," and accordingly retracted the earlier statements in which his original view was expressed.

6. The attainment of perfection is attested by a twofold evidence: the internal evidence of the presence of the Spirit of God, and the external evidence of entire freedom from sin. The internal evidence however is susceptible of intermission and of varying degrees of certainty.

7. Perfection, though possible in this life, is a rare experience. It usually comes, if at all, just before death. Wesley advised extreme caution in making a

profession of perfection. Those who ventured such a profession he admonished against the dangers of pride and fanaticism; yet he favored a humble acknowledgment of the blessing in cases where it was enjoyed, in order that the glory might be given to God. Even then, rather than a specific claim of perfection, he advised a general description of indicative experience without giving it any definite name. It is doubtful if Wesley himself ever professed perfection, and later Methodists were exceedingly shy of making such a profession.

The New York Perfectionists, as we have said, were Wesleyan in origin and resembled the Wesleyans in nearly all of the characteristic features mentioned above. Their chief contributions to the development of the subject were, that they gave to the doctrine a more prominent position than any of their predecessors, that they were more free in professing perfection, and that they laid more stress on the necessity of faith as a means of its attainment.

Notwithstanding the emergence of the doctrine of perfection into sufficient prominence to justify the name "Perfectionist," all the advocates of perfection thus far considered, however much they differed as to the relative importance of the doctrine, agreed in assigning to it a more or less subordinate position.

The final step in the development of the doctrine of perfection was influenced by the course which New England theology had been taking for nearly a hundred years. Jonathan Edwards, the founder of the system, was a passionate believer in the Calvinistic doctrine of

the absolute sovereignty of God, and in the ardor of his revulsion against Arminian free will had adopted the philosophic determinism of Locke. Assuming as his postulates that there could be no such thing as an uncaused event and that the causes of actions were the motives which led to them, he argued that God exercised absolute sovereignty over man not by physical coercion but by arranging the motives which determined his actions. Subsequent New England thinkers felt that this theory virtually destroyed free agency and tended to paralyze effort. Consequently there was an increasing movement among Edwards' successors to emphasize human ability. As the climax of this movement Nathaniel W. Taylor (the "Dr. Taylor" of Noyes's *Confession of Religious Experience*) took the ground that motives, though they had influence in determining action, were not causative. This made man again the efficient cause of his own actions. Dr. Taylor and other revival leaders then proceeded to urge, in the manner of Pelagius, that man was able perfectly to obey the law of God without the aid of grace. From this position Perfectionism was an obvious deduction. But Dr. Taylor declined to take this step, and when Perfectionism broke out in the New Haven Seminary under his ministrations, he strenuously opposed it on the ground that the freedom necessary to the highest perfection of moral government might lead to that degree of sin which was actually found in the world.

We are now in a position to see Noyes's theory in its historical perspective:

He followed the line of Augustine in teaching that

perfection was the result of divine grace dispensed through Christ; but he recognized, with Wesley, the Pelagian insistence upon the part that must be played by the individual so far as to admit that this grace was never given unless earnestly striven for through outward means.

He agreed with Wesley's general definition of perfection as obedience to Christ's law of perfect love to God and man, a state which was consistent with involuntary ignorance and error.

He went beyond Wesley and approximated the position of the mediæval mystics in the completeness of his detachment from the law of statutes and ordinances. Wesley in theory virtually held that the law of love included the statute law, and in practice he and his followers remained almost as conscience-bound by the statute law as the legalistic sects from which they had come out. Noyes on the other hand maintained stoutly the freedom of mature believers from all outward law; but he allowed this freedom only to those who were genuinely saved from sin, and as an offset to law he brought into operation the machinery of personal leadership and mutual instruction.

He concurred with Wesley and the Quakers in the general view that there was a gradual preparation before, and a gradual growth after the attainment of perfection; but he defined more clearly than they the two-fold agency, spiritual and intelectual, by which regeneration was brought about.

He agreed with the New York Perfectionists in the fundamental importance which he assigned to faith as

the means of apprehending the power that gave perfection; but he insisted upon the no less fundamental importance of confession as the complement of faith, asserting that faith became an active principle which secured the fulfillment of the promise of perfection only in a confession which left no way for retreat.

He accepted Wesley's formulation of the twofold evidence, internal and external, by which the attainment of perfection in any individual case was attested.

He held that perfection once attained was forever secure. His teaching on this point resembled the Calvinistic doctrine of the "perseverance of the saints"; but he differed from the Calvinists in dividing believers into two classes, those who were saved from sin and those who were not, and in allowing security only to the former class.

He reverted to the Montanus-Amaury theory of a progressive revelation, but instead of regarding religious experience as a series of discontinuous jumps corresponding to successive revelations such as those of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, he viewed it as a continuous evolution from a rudimentary beginning to a consummation of perfect holiness, first in a Jewish dispensation, then in a Gentile dispensation, the second coming of Christ at the end of the apostolic age being the dividing line. The fact of Christ's past second coming with its corollary of perfection attained by the Primitive Church as the fruit of a complete cycle of religious experience Noyes believed to be the chief ground of confidence that perfection was now attainable.

Finally, he looked upon perfection not as a mere

appendage to other more important considerations, but as the focal point of the religious life. Consequently he devoted more attention than any of his predecessors to studying its conditions and devising practical means of its attainment.

CHAPTER XXXIX

GENERAL VIEW OF NOYES'S THEOLOGY

Having reached the conclusion that the teachings of the church were erroneous upon two subjects of such vital importance as the second coming of Christ and salvation from sin, Noyes could not feel confidence in his theological foundations until he had reëxamined all the traditional creeds. For three and a half years following his conversion to Perfectionism he was wholly absorbed in the initial development of the new faith, and the task of theological reconstruction was necessarily postponed. But in August 1837, as we have seen, he commenced the publication of *The Witness,* and in this and in subsequent periodicals during the next ten years he worked out a system of theology which may fairly be called complete. The various articles embodying his beliefs were collected and published in 1847 in a book of five hundred pages entitled *The Berean.* From this volume the following outline is derived:

I. The Ultimate Ground of Faith.

There are several kinds of belief, a belief of the imagination, of testimony, of the reason, and of the senses. Besides these there is another kind, which may be called spiritual belief. One spirit can present itself to the perceptions of another, and communicate

thoughts and persuasions without the intervention of imagination, testimony, reasoning, or the senses.

While we duly value all the lower evidences of Bible-religion, we are convinced that the belief which is caused by these evidences is but the precursor and auxiliary of spiritual belief. Here is the advantage which the believer in God may claim over all other disciples of truth. From all the sophistries of "the disputers of this world" he can appeal to the evidence of his own internal perceptions.

The process by which believers usually arrive at a solid assurance of the existence of God is this: First they hear of him from their parents and teachers (and it has been God's care from the beginning to provide this first means of instruction). Thus their minds are preoccupied with a persuasion of his existence. Then they read the book, which contains the record of his past manifestations to mankind and gives them directions for approaching him. Finally they follow those directions and ascertain that there is a God by actual communion with him.

II. The Bible.

As the Bible is the record of God's past communications with men, so it is the most valuable external means of his continued communications. The primitive gospel, opened by the atonement, is kept open to the world not by a church, nor a set of ordinances, nor a line of successors to the apostles, but by the Bible. By the Bible Christ and the apostles yet live and speak on earth.

The Bible being the representative of Christ's king-

dom in the world has been the center of conflict between the powers of good and evil.

The Jews kept God's records till the advent of Christ. They refused to take charge of the New Testament, and he gave their office to the Roman Church. The new secretary kept the Bible safely, but he "kept it laid up in a napkin." The Reformation gave the Bible into the hands of the Protestant churches, and at the same time the invention of printing made its suppression thenceforth impossible. The Protestant churches have drawn the Bible to and fro in their sectarian differences, but it must be acknowledged to their honor that they have cherished a zeal for biblical investigation and have scattered the Bible without comment over a great part of the earth.

The Old Testament as it is today existed when Christ was on earth, and he assumed it as the basis of his own religious system. The New Testament is the work of his accredited agents. The Bible therefore will stand or fall with Christ, and Christ will stand or fall with the Bible. Whoever loves Christ loves the Bible as a whole and knows that it is a vehicle of light and life.

III. The Guide of Interpretation.

Having ascertained that the Bible is the word of God, the question arises, who shall be our instructor in that word. The Catholic answers, the church by its traditions and the teachings of its priests. The Protestant answers, we need no instructor; the Bible itself is the sufficient rule of faith and practice. We answer, inspiration.

It should be presumed that God, if he has given the world a book, has also provided an interpreter. Accordingly we find that the Bible itself plainly directs us to inspiration as the ultimate guide of faith.

We are not among those who refer everything to spiritual influence. It is true of the interpreter of the Bible that the more knowledge he has the better. But we believe that divine illumination and spiritual experience are by far the most essential qualifications for interpreting the word of God. The Bible is no revelation to those who can not read; it is a revelation of certain introductory truths to those who can only read; it is a revelation of much curious wisdom to those who can read with the help of human learning; it is a revelation of the deep things of God to those who can read with the help of inspiration.

IV. The Origin of Evil.

The ultimate cause of all evil is an uncreated evil being, as the ultimate cause of all good is an uncreated good being.

If it be said that evil is nothing but good in disguise, we answer that no evil is good or can be turned to good in any other than a relative sense. Inoculation for the kine-pox is good because it is a preventive of the small-pox. But if there were no small-pox, men would not take the kine-pox and call it good. The chastisements which men suffer from the hand of God are good as being curatives or preventives of greater moral miseries, but in any other sense they are only evil.

Furthermore, the theory that evil is a legitimate

necessary product of God's benevolence is not in harmony with the sincerity which we have learned to look for in his character. We find God in all his recorded dealings with men vehemently resisting evil by word and deed. Now to suppose, that with all this appearance of single-eyed goodness he decreed or permitted the birth of evil and regards it as the means of the greatest good, is to make him a double-dealer unworthy of confidence and love.

The existence and antagonism of good and evil are not the results but the antecedents and motives of God's purpose in creation. The universe was manifestly created for the purpose of furnishing a battlefield whereon the Son of God and the Devil might come to a decisive conflict. From the fact that God might have abstained from creation it follows that his purpose in a certain sense extends to every particular of the great conflict. But his part in an evil event is merely to determine its time and circumstances. A general for the purpose of ultimately destroying the enemy might open to him the barriers of his own territory and allow for a time a devastating invasion. In such a case it might be said that the general actually purposed the movements of the enemy. In the same sense it may be said that God purposes the movements ments of the Devil in this world, but not his existence and wickedness, which make those purposes necessary.

We believe that the goodness of God in the gift of redemption can never be appreciated so long as it is viewed through the medium of a theology which teaches that good and evil spring ultimately from the same fountain. The Bible teaches that the redemption

purchased by the death of Christ is an "unspeakable gift." But if we hold the common view of the origin of evil, we can not but see that the salvation God gives is just the measure of ruin he has wrought. No wonder that the mass of mankind, whose lot scarcely presents a preponderance of good over evil, are neither warm in their gratitude nor sincere in their worship. They may fear the power of God, but blinded to his goodness their religion can be no better than the servility of sycophants bowing before the throne of a grim tyrant.

V. The Divine Nature.

In the first chapters of the Bible we find clear intimations of a plurality of persons in the godhead. The Hebrew word which is translated "God" in Genesis 1 : 1, etc., is in the plural form. The plural pronouns "us" and "our" are so intermingled with the singular pronouns "he" and "his" in Genesis 1 :26, 27, that we can see no propriety in the language except on the supposition that there is at once unity and plurality in the constitution of God. The singular and plural pronouns are intermingled in the language concerning the first man in the same manner as they are intermingled in the language concerning God. Furthermore, it is declared that God "made man in His own image"; and from what follows this declaration it clearly appears that the word "man" in this case includes two persons, male and female.

In the New Testament we have an account of a person in human form professing to be not the entire godhead, but the Son of God. We do not believe that

the Son was created, but that he is coexistent with the Father, coördinate with Him in the work of creation, and bears a relation to Him like that which woman bears to man.

The moment we begin to interrogate nature in relation to her parentage, we have proof as broad as the universe that the godhead is a duality; for every link in the chain of life from the lowest vegetable to the highest animal is a duality. If we find two elements in all the streams of life, why should we not infer that the same two elements are in the Fountain?

VI. Creation.

God created heaven and earth not out of nothing, but out of substantial though chaotic material which existed from eternity.*

VII. The Nature of Man.

The foregoing theory of the origin of evil leads to new views of the nature and extent of human depravity. As the source of all evil in this world is an uncreated evil being, it is evident that the ultimate principle of corruption in mankind is spiritual. Men are wicked because they are enveloped in the spirit

* Noyes's dualism, it will be observed, is complex. First, there is the all-embracing duality of spirit and matter, which are not antagonistic, as in the Gnostic system, but friendly. Then, on the spiritual side there is the antagonistic duality of God and Satan. Possession of matter is the object of their strife, and creation is an invasion of the material universe. Next, the good power is itself a duality consisting of the Father and the Son; and for aught Noyes says to the contrary the evil power also might be dual. Finally, the principle of dualism runs through all the descending series of life in combination with matter as exhibited in creation.—G. W. N.

of the Devil, and so are "led captive at his will." This is true of all in their primary unregenerate state.

But we learn from Christ's parable of the sower, that there is an original difference in the character of men. Some are depraved not in their original spirit, but by combination with and subjection to the Devil. Others are depraved not only by combination with and subjection to the Devil, but by original identity with him. The distinctive character of the two classes is evinced by the fact that the former have an ear for the word of God, while the latter have not.

If there is an original difference in the spiritual nature of men, how can they properly be treated as free moral agents? In order to answer this question we must define free moral agency. A free moral agent is a being who has power to act and knowledge of the right and wrong of actions. So Paul lays his foundation. It is not necessary that a person should have a good disposition, or be free from an evil one, in order to constitute him a free moral agent responsible for his actions. If it were, God could not be regarded as a free moral agent, for his propensity to righteousness is all-controlling and unchangeable. As God with such a propensity is yet a praiseworthy free moral agent, because he has the power and knowledge requisite to do evil as well as good, so the Devil with an all-controlling and unchangeable propensity to unrighteousness is yet a free moral agent worthy of condemnation, because he has the requisite power and knowledge to do good as well as evil. If men have power to do wrong, they have power to do right; for so far as natural power is concerned it is as easy

to feed one's neighbor as to kill him. And if men know their own rights and wrongs, they know the rights and wrongs of every other being; for the whole law of God is summed up in this: "Whatsoever ye would that others do to you, do ye even so to them." Since men therefore possess the two essentials of free moral agency, their disposition, though it be diabolical and innate, does in no way affect their freedom and responsibility.

The foregoing views reveal the grounds of election and reprobation. "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." What did God foreknow about those whom he predestinated? He foreknew them as the seed of the Son of man, "having ears to hear" his word; and for this reason he wrote their names in the book of life from the foundation of the world. Reprobation too is based on foreknowledge of original character; and in this there is nothing arbitrary or unjust, because his decrees of this kind are predicated on the necessity resulting from the existence of uncreated evil. Whatever odium attaches to the fact of the reprobation of the wicked must at last be laid upon the Devil, whose eternal wickedness is the foundation of all the evils which disfigure the creation of God.*

* If reincarnation is possible only when a spirit fits a body somewhat as a key fits a lock, evolution or stirpiculture or both may have so altered the physical, moral, and intellectual constitution of mankind as to make reincarnation of the wicked increasingly difficult. In fact the "seed of the Devil" may in this manner have been already bred out of the human race. Denial of access to matter brought about by progressive modification of key and lock may well be the "lake of fire" in which, according to Rev. 20:10, the Devil and his angels are to be forever confined.—G. W. N.

VIII. Redemption.

(a) The Law.—The recovery of man from the power of the Devil is accomplished by Christ. But mercy is for the lost; and as the mercy of the gospel must be desired and embraced by the sinner in order to become available, it is necessary not only that men should be lost, but also that they should be sensible of the fact. The law effects this preparation for the gospel, first by revealing, and then by increasing sin, thus leaving no way of escape but through Christ.

(b) The Atonement.—Throughout Christ's life on earth there was a desperate conflict between the divine nature on the one hand and the spirit of the Devil on the other, with human nature for the battlefield. At the commencement of Christ's ministry the Devil made a personal attempt to seduce him into sin. After plying him with temptations similar to those by which Adam fell, and others more subtle and mighty, with every advantage that could give them force, the tempter was compelled to quit the field baffled and dismayed. Christ followed up this victory by a proclamation of the gospel and an outpouring of the spirit of life. The seventy disciples, whom he commissioned to go abroad through the land, "returned, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." In the final battle of the cross the Devil and the Son of God met face to face, the strength of each was tried to the uttermost, and the Devil was overcome and cast out. Thus Christ became what the Devil had been before, "the prince of this world."

This view enables us to understand how the sins of the world are disposed of. Man is saved not because God abrogates the law or evades it by a fiction, but because God rightfully imputes the sins, of which men are the instruments, to the Devil as their real author, and Christ by a life of righteousness destroys the Devil. Thus the cause of sin was put away and the leaven of righteousness introduced. God could then safely withdraw his wrath and proclaim forgiveness to man.

IX. Faith.

"Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. . . . As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

Christ's nature while in this world was twofold. As to the interior of his being he was the Son of God, that existed from eternity with the Father; at the same time he had a material body, which was born of a woman. To which of these parts does he refer in calling himself the "bread of life"? Most clearly the former, for he says expressly, "The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven"; and this declaration he repeats subsequently not less than four times.

By what process are we to "eat the flesh" and "drink the blood" of Christ? As it is not the material flesh and blood that is to be received, so it can not be the material body that is to eat and drink. The food and

that which feeds upon it must be homogeneous. It is evident therefore that it is the flesh and blood of our inner man that is to partake of the flesh and blood of Christ. Accordingly the terms "eat" and "drink" are repeatedly explained in this same discourse by equivalent terms, which denote acts of the inner man. When our inner man comes to the Son, sees him, and believes on him, we do the thing meant by the terms "eating his flesh" and "drinking his blood."

In exact accordance with this exposition Christ in the conclusion of his discourse specifies the form in which his flesh and blood is conveyed. Since the thing received in the act of believing is a proposition, it follows that Christ's word is the vehicle of his flesh and blood. And so he explains himself. He says: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

As food gives its nature to the body that receives it, so the spiritual flesh and blood of Christ, received through his word by faith, communicates its nature to the spirit of the believer. And as Christ in his spiritual nature is the ever-living Son of God, the believer, being identified with him, becomes a son of God and partaker of the eternal life of the Father.

X. External Discipline.

Every person who has been enlightened by the word of God finds that he has a spiritual nature which is superior to his intellectual, and that to be led by the spirit is better than to lean to his own understanding. One who has but just learned this lesson naturally

despises all the secondary means of discipline and guidance, which he valued before and which the world rests in. But after some experience the question in one way or another forces itself upon his consideration, whether there can not be a co-agency of his spirit and understanding, so that he can follow his spiritual instincts and at the same time give heed to common sense. If he searches the Bible for an answer, he will soon discover the following facts:

First, there is no necessary repugnance between our spiritual and intellectual natures; they can work peaceably in the same yoke and accomplish much more than either alone.

Second, persons who have received the spirit of God may yet need to be instructed and exhorted even with reference to the exercise of their spiritual gifts.

Third, those who are led by the spirit of God, though they can not come under law, may yet come under rules, and may act acceptably under the conjoint influence of internal impulses and external regulations.

Fourth, spiritual persons can and should restrain themselves from disorderly action and exercise common sense even under the impulses of the spirit; and those who say that they are compelled by the spirit of God to do things of a disorderly character are in a great error.

Fifth, the Primitive Church, though possessing the gifts of the Spirit, established and maintained a system of mutual instruction, which proved an effectual substitute for the law.

XI. Characteristics of the Spiritual Man.

First, the spiritual man has a loving heart. Carnal believers may have many of the external gifts of the Spirit; but only the spiritual have that loving heart which "suffereth long, and is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in inquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; never faileth." This unquestionably is the grand attainment which divides the full-born son of God from the "babe in Christ." It should be noticed that charity, as Paul describes it, is distinguished not only from the gift of utterance, revelations, and wonder-working faith, but even from that which is commonly accounted charity, that is, benevolence to the poor, and from self-sacrificing devotion. Indeed it is far from being that outward bound, bustling quality of character which usually passes for religious benevolence. Its elements are mostly negative. The idea of "doing good" is not very prominent in it, but as Paul says of it in another place "it worketh no ill." It is just that quality which fits a man to live in social contact with his fellow men without giving offense and without taking offense. It implies a thorough extinction of selfishness, a perfect appreciation of the interests of others and of the value of peace, and a quiet reliance on the faithfulness of eternal love.

Second, the spiritual man has a renewed mind. His intellect is not only under the influence of that spirit which "searcheth the deep things of God," but is

assimilated to it and acts in unison with it. Like the word of God, by which it is created, it is "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword," and all things are "naked and opened" to it. The renewed mind instead of being tossed about by every wind of doctrine readily detects the impostures of the Devil, and stands firm in the truth.

Third, the spiritual man has an unquenchable desire for progress. Paul was certainly a fit representative of the spiritual class. Let us see what was his state of mind. He says: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; . . . that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. . . . Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Was there ever a more vivid expression of God-like ambition? The apostle adds: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

XII. Our Relation to the Primitive Church.

The apostles, prophets, and believers, who were gathered into the spiritual world during the period immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, are certainly risen from the dead and associated with Christ. This no one who believes that Christ came the second time according to his promise will deny.



ONEIDA COMMUNITY MANSION, 1878

Those who speak of Christ as "the great Head of the Church" ought to remember that he is first of all the head of the Primitive Church, in which he was first revealed.

The invisible Primitive Church is in reality what the Roman Church assumes to be, the holy, apostolic, catholic mother-church. It is not like the old Jewish Church, changeable and transmissive. The priests under the law were many, "because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death." But Christ, "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Though he died, he is risen from the dead, and still lives with entire ability to wield all power in heaven and on earth. For the very same reason the priesthood of the apostles and prophets is unchangeable. They are risen with him, and still live fully competent to share in the administration of his kingdom. Christ gave "the power of the keys" to his apostles, but they never gave it to any successors. After eighteen hundred years of sinless experience they are today better qualified to decide the destinies of men than they were when on earth. They are our judges; and we shall all find at last that there is no entrance into the holy city but through the twelve apostolic gates.

The Primitive Church is a political as well as ecclesiastical organization. When God laid its foundations, he gave the world its capital. When he set his Son upon the throne, he established a political nucleus, which will ultimately gather about itself in federal union all the nations of the earth or dash them in pieces.

XIII. God's Covenant with Abraham.

God's original covenant with Abraham contained the following promises: to give him an innumerable seed; to give them the land of Canaan; to be a God to him and his seed; to bless him and his seed; to bless in him all families of the earth.

As the first covenant pertained primarily to the Jews, so also did the new covenant. Christ, who came to establish the new covenant, said expressly, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"; and he instructed his disciples in their first mission to "go not into the way of the Gentiles," but to "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Up to the time of Paul's conversion there had been no preaching to the Gentiles, and Paul, though he was the apostle to the Gentiles, acted in all cases according to the foregoing instructions of Christ, preaching first to the Jews and turning to the Gentiles only when rejected by the Jews.

It is evident that God's covenant with Abraham remains still in force unless there is explicit evidence to the contrary. No such evidence is found in the Bible or in the history of the Jews. When the people of Israel had greatly provoked the anger of God by their apostasy, the voices of the prophets were heard predicting desolation; yet looking beyond the period of calamity they foretold that in the last days the scattered house of Israel should return and be built up; that Jerusalem should then be called "the faithful city"; that the Gentiles should "come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising"; and that out of Zion should "go forth the law, and the word of the

Lord from Jerusalem." We therefore conclude that the Jews are to be restored to their place as the peculiar people of God, and that an important consequence of their restoration will be the subjugation of the world to Christ. No nation would be so well qualified as the Jews both on account of their long discipline and their wide dispersion to become the head of a federal theocracy.

We do not however subscribe to the theory that the conversion of the Jews is the next thing in order. The gospel of salvation from sin requires preparation on the part of those to whom it comes. God did not bring it into the world till he had trained a nation by a long course of moral discipline to receive it. When the material which the legal discipline of the Jews and the civilization of the Greeks and Romans had made ready was used up, the work of the gospel ceased and a second dispensation of law took its place. As we approach the end of the second dispensation, we may anticipate the order in which the nations will be brought into Christ by observing their comparative advancement in legal morality and civilization. The leading Gentile nations are now clearly in advance of the Jews in these prerequisites. The single circumstance that these nations receive the whole of the Bible while the Jews reject the New Testament is a sufficient index of their superior preparation. The Jews stand next, because they acknowledge a large portion of the Bible. The Mohammedans occupy an intermediate position between the Jews and the Pagans, as they believe in one God and receive more or less of the Old Testament. Last on the scale of sus-

ceptibility stands the whole of the heathen world. The conclusion from this survey is, that the best portion of Gentile Christendom will receive the gospel first, that the Jews will then be brought in and will gather the great harvest of the Mohammedan and heathen world.

The completed church then will consist of five distinct departments, the Jewish part of the Primitive Church, the Gentile part of the Primitive Church, the Gentiles now farthest advanced in preparation for the gospel, the mass of the Jewish nation, and the mass of Mohammedans and Pagans. Conceiving the church in the form of a tree, the two Gentile departments will occupy the middle part of the trunk, and the two Jewish departments the extremities. A Jewish root takes hold on God, and a Jewish portion of the trunk takes hold on the mass of nations.

XIV. The Final Destiny of Man.

One of the most interesting points in relation to the last dispensation of Christ is, that this world is to be given to Christ. Nothing but such a conquest can fulfill the predictions of the Bible and give propriety to the great drama which will then be finished. The angel swears that the mystery of God should be finished, "as he hath declared to his servants, the prophets." What are the declarations of God to the prophets concerning the catastrophe of this world's history? The following extracts will answer:

"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above

the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. . . . It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

The glorious hope, which fills the foreground of the prospect of those who wait for the finishing of the mystery of God, is presented in this passage of Isaiah:

"In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things. . . . And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

And John describing his vision of "the holy city,

New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven" says:

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

It is clear from the New Testament descriptions, that the New Jerusalem is not a city to be hereafter instituted, but one long ago established, the place into which the primitive saints passed either by death or by change at the second coming, and where they met the Father, Son, and holy angels. This organization is to be revealed ultimately in this world. Its distinctive character when revealed will not be changed. It will still be the home of angels and just men made perfect, entirely exempt from sin and death. Yet it does not appear that it will at once embrace the whole population of the world. On the contrary John represents it as a city standing in the midst of the nations, accessible to them and shedding its healing influence over them, but not including them within its walls. "The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut." Yet the prophecy immediately and emphatically adds, "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth." But "they that do his commandments" may enter in through the gates into the city, and have the right to the fruit of the tree of life.

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